聖剣使いの禁呪詠唱
10
聖剣使いの禁呪詠唱
ワールドブレイク
あわむら赤光
ill.:refeia
The Swordbringer comes back.
GA文庫

Table of Contents

Illustration
Prologue
Chapter 1: Christmas is the premonition of trouble
Chapter 2: Santa Claus is a bit early
Chapter 3: The man called Isurugi Gen
Chapter 4: Christmas Party
Chapter 5: The man called Isurugi Jin
Chapter 6: A malice similar to wildfire
Epilogue
Credits

聖剣使いの禁呪詠唱

10

The Swordbringer comes back.

おや。
そこを行くのは、
はいもろ
でな？
聖夜の前の不思議な再会。
プレゼントは「うさ子」と共に。

ぐぎぎぎ……
この工口凶器めぇ
私のプレゼントのほうが
うれしいわよね？
X'masパーティーin亜鐘学園！
女のバトルは今日も白熱!?

《螢惑(けいこく)》か……。
さて……行くよ。
燼場亮(しばあきら)
牢獄から抜けだした
禁じられし『ランクS』
鬼炎あやつる《悪魔》の業。
「六翼会議」の頂点がここに――。

Download all your Fav Light Novels from Just Light Novels

Prologue

Human eyes look ahead.
So why is it so difficult to keep on living, without looking anywhere but ahead?
An asymmetrically splendid pipe organ was in such a small concert hall.
The melody edited with grave notes was truly majestic and splendid.
It rampaged as if rupturing the hall from the inside.
In the lonely concert hall, fantasia was played by the too-good famed musical instrument.
In contrast to the giant-like organ, the instrumentalist was also small.
It looked no more than a very young girl.
Her hair color was white. Her dress was also white. Her doll-like lifeless skin was also white. Furthermore, she wore silk long white gloves.
Only the color of her eyes that seemed to be carried away by zeal was blue.
Displaying her small delicate fingers, the cool girl was entranced by her own musical performance.
Childishness and expertise.
Extravagance and solemnity.
The melody created by the girl and the famed musical instrument perfectly harmonized these conflicting elements, sublimating them into art.
The audience seating on the first floor was all empty. There was only the figure of a person on the right-end balcony of the second floor. Moreover, that person was sleeping deeply from the beginning.
In the lonely concert hall, the girl continued the musical performance without paying attention to them.
The pipe organ and the concert hall for her and her only. Rather, it was possible to say that it was the ultimate luxury.
Playing the keyboard of the pipe organ to her heart’s content, the girl finished the musical performance.
Without sweating or taking a pause until the end.
She closed her eyes as if being immersed in the trailing notes of the piece she played with her instrument.
At that moment—
A calm applause echoed on the ceiling of the hall.
The girl immediately carved a broad smile.
It was a wicked-looking, but somewhat shiny, mysterious smile.

She turned around with all her body and turned her wet-looking eyes to the balcony seating on the front of the second floor.
– If you are there, then do not be so stealthily, I was hoping I could speak to you.
To the man who stood like an unnoticed shadow in the seats.
With an ear-tickling and fascinating tone of voice, and that didn't fit a young voice.
– I'm not so insensitive to make a sound during your musical performance….
The man replied in the darkness stagnated on the balcony.
He also spoke in a unique way.
His tone felt like a whisper, but she heard him amazingly clear.
– I played one. But if that is the case, may I hear what your impressions are?
– Your musical performance was as wonderful as always…
– Ufuh. Even though you are a misanthrope, you honestly praised me.
– Neither books nor music know of sins…
As he replied that, the man slowly moved to the handrail.
Then, his appearance was revealed.
He was a youthful, yet stylish person.
His facial features said he was 20 years old or so.
However, his facial expression was of a person in the prime of their life wrapped in bitterness.
The thin frame glasses gave him an even more intellectual appearance, suiting him.
The three-piece suit style was perfect too.
He was the master of the girl.
The King of the □Demons□ who didn't follow the White Knight Organization.
His name was Shiba Akira.
– It has been four years. Get a bit closer.
The girl looked up at the balcony far away and opened her arms as if receiving him.
– It's not like your presbyopia progressed before seeing me in all this time, Louise.
Shiba glared at the stage and bluntly refused the girl's request.
– Ufuh. Will you try checking every nook and cranny of my body to see if I have aged in these four years?
– Drop the nonsense already. To be clear, I don't know every nook and cranny of your body from four years ago…
There was no sweet echo there, but at the same time, there was no reserve.
He was stronger than her, therefore, he was her king.
However, both formed *Six Wings*, so they were the same.
The concert hall had five large and empty balcony seats.
The throne, which was where Shiba was, was the front seat.
The girl—Louise thought.
As expected, the place where he is standing is perfect for a picture.
The air in the concert hall became more peaceful, dignified and tense.

As Louise looked up at him in ecstasy, the sound of two heavy doors opening was heard.
The sign of people appeared on the balcony seats, lining up as if waiting on the left and right of the front seats.
Each of them made rough and rude sound of footsteps strut.
– Wha? Oh right, Louise's performance is over by now, huh.
– I'm terribly grateful for that, Leonard. I'd rather listen to your silly talk than making me listen to boring classical music.
The miserable duo stood by the handrail; it seemed that their parents didn't cultivate character or sensitivity in them.
The one wearing a cowboy hat was "Flash Sword" Leonard Van Percy.
The muscular one was "Blue Knight" Boris Terry.
The uncultured men where the exact opposite of Shiba whose manners were sophisticated and composed.
Louise was disconcerted because they were part of the same Six Wings.
– When I hear your discomforting thick voices, I feel like my ears will rot.
Hey, hey, let's end the meeting soon, Akira-kun. I would like to hear you continue the rest only.
– That's a fascinating proposal, but…. Making light of the meeting is the same as calling it our disgrace.
Shiba said mixed with a bitter smile.
Leonard and Boris laughed loudly at that joke with a 「Definitely」.
The six 「Demons」who possessed powerful *Ancestral Arts*, including the person who slept deeply and another one who hadn't come yet.
Those who called themselves Six Wings.
They were the center of the *Counter* that bared its fangs at White Knight Organization's Six Heads.
– Miko-san is still asleep huh.
– In any case, she won't wake up. We only have to wait for "Invisible" now.
– Even though it's the first time in four years that the six of us assemble, it's been in vain.
– Relax, Boris. Shiba-san came back, no? This will get interesting from now on, I know it. Let's clear up the accumulated anger with all that we have!
– Leonard! Can that head of yours think of other thing than rampage?
Being fed up with him, Louise reproached the young man with a cowboy hat who showed a belligerent smile.
– Of course I can. Rather, praise me for controlling myself for four years! Will you let me challenge the Six Heads this time?
Leonard became defiant and laughed loudly and vulgarly. As if—
Cutting that into two with a single stroke,
– Don't forget the words of the king.
An uncanny, knife-like sharp, bizarre voice warned.
A mechanized voice that was neither male nor female.
Without a second thought, Leonard swallowed his loud laughter.

On the other hand, Louise turned her eyes to the balcony seats on the far left.
Without realizing it, the entrance door was open.
However, no human figure could be seen there.
No presence could be felt either.
– Leonard. The time when your sword is needed will definitely come.
However, this is not the moment. Remain in the darkness.
Only a voice definitely echoed.
– I know, Boss “Invisible”. Shiba-san has just come back and I got a bit carried away.
Leonard covered his face with the cowboy hat, looking embarrassed.
– Then we are all good.
Only a voice echoed on the empty left-end balcony.
That was the location of *Invisible*, the one whose appearance nobody could see.*
*TN: This invisible is the furigana for a different word, which in this case is “extraordinary assassin”.
When Shiba returned to the throne, the concert hall was engulfed in a calm air, but when this man—or woman—lurked in the seats, a gruesome atmosphere oozed out.
Anyhow, with Leonard acting like an adult, “Invisible” also kept silent.
It fell completely silent like the surface of water that became calm without any waves.
Shiba’s whisper rippled as if throwing pebbles on it.
– Our plans are ripening…
Taken aback, Louise realized.
The same happened to Leonard and Boris. Shiba didn’t show any concerns to the quarrels around him and left them alone, but when he opened his mouth, the ones around him couldn’t help but concentrate.
– As we hypothesized, the White Knight Organization has swelled up and now they have numerous talented persons—in other words, and like a catalog, there are lot of options lined up in front of us: we win them over as comrades, transform them into Metaphysicals and use them as soldiers, etcetera….
– But there are things we haven’t foreseen too.
– Yes, it will be hard unless those guys start snarling at each other more and more.
Louise pouted like a child.
It was nice that the White Knight Organization had increased its fighting strength, but as an organization, it was ideal, rather convenient that fell in a position from which it was impossible to recover no matter how much time passed.
– I’d really enjoy seeing them banding together, you know? After all, if the opponent is strong, then they’re worth defeating.

– There’s no need for “they’re worth defeating”, stupid Leonard. It’s best to have fun and great profits.
Leonard and Boris started another silly conversation but,
– Haimura Moroha… huh.
When Shiba said that name aloud, everyone held their tongues and made their own facial expressions.
For Louise, it was an accursed reverberation.
The name of the boy who pushed each and every difficulty aside and became the unifying force of the White Knight Organization.
– An enthusiasm that generally no ordinary person possess, but… oh dear me….!
The thought of Shiba who muttered so couldn’t understand it, but his face that looked like it ruminated it with closed eyes was devastating for Louise.
She had heard that Haimura Moroha met him by chance and only exchanged words for a brief moment.
To end up leaving a lasting, solid impression in the memories of this misanthrope was.
Jealous, Louise detested more and more this unknown boy Haimura.
But setting that aside—
– The more powerful our opponent becomes, the stronger we have to get. It is indispensable to hurry up our plans.
Everyone strongly agreed with Shiba’s words.
– Sir Edward gave a name to it, which was it again? Oh right… it was… Archfiend, right? Perfection is very hard to say, but we should accelerate the research of Evil Spirit-class.
– For that reason, we prayed for your return.
– Now that Akira-kun is here, there’s no need to be careful about the metaphysicalification of 『Saviors』.
– Alright, let’s kidnap them quickly and transform them with a bang bang!
– But still. Not even Miko-san has inexhaustible supplies for transformation.
Boris grumbled and everyone’s gazes were fixed on the sleeping girl on the right-end balcony.
– I said that the *catalog* is lined up, yes? Then it’s fine to do a close examination….
– Nah…. By the way, wasn’t the Evil Spirit-class that used Sakho as the core stronger than the one that used Kashiwaba, Boss?
– Affirmative. The one of Kashiwaba Gen’ichi wasn’t at all weak. However, I am obliged to say that the one of Flavie Sakho was stronger than the enormous firepower, vitality and the obsession to even corner PSG.
– What an interesting result. As a 『Savior』, Kashiwaba was stronger than I thought.
– Like I thought, it wasn’t the strength of her egotism or beliefs but the strength of her emotions that had a great effect in this?
– I think the same.
Nobody denied their opinions.

However, while Louise did not agree,
– “Don’t knock it till you’ve tried it”. That is the truth in times of research, no?
The “One should experiment as soon as one thinks of it” was just a principle.
Her pet theory said: You can build as many excellent golems as the number of broken toys you have.
They just had to do the same but with 『Metaphysicals』.
In this case, the souls of people became toys, but Louise’s pet theory said that if “we worry too much about it, the researchers will succumb”.
– Then… who do we select?
Shiba looked at all present.
– Hmm. A person who’s not very strong as a 『Savior』, but is the owner of an extremely dark obstinacy and conviction; that’s the most suitable one.
– Isn’t that usually harder than finding a strong guy?
– Like I thought, this is the moment when Boss “Invisible” appears on stage, right? You’ve been frighteningly monitoring the people and movements of the White Knight Organization.
– Affirmative. I have been listening to them for a long time.
– See? I was right!
Leonard snapped his fingers.
Shiba nodded a little and decided to leave the personnel selection to “Invisible”.
One more thing,
– The touchstone is Haimura Moroha. He has no malice….
Shiba decided and Louise complied with an “I see”.
The boy who slaughtered two Evil Spirit-classes. There was no other person more qualified than him.
Moreover, if they could bury him, the unifying force of the White Knight Organization, it would be like killing two birds with one stone.
Louise hatefully and jealously wished the death of Haimura Moroha from the bottom of her heart.
She turned and faced the pipe organ and played the funeral march as her feelings welled up.
All the things that had to be discussed were completed and people left one after another.
The entrances of all balconies transcended dimensions, directly connecting to each of their homes.
This concert hall was the conference room for 6 people.
Specially designed and built by Louise who hated gathering at inorganic offices.
The inscription read “Tír na nÓg”.*
*TN: That term is the furigana reading for “a concert hall that is not in this world”.

聖剣使いの
禁呪詠唱
ワールドブレイク

Chapter 1: Christmas is the premonition of trouble

Morning. Before going to school.
Haimura Moroha was changing into his uniform in his dorm room, and, next to him,
– This year’s Christmas Eve will be on Sunday nanodesu.
His roommate Shimon Maya said with a smile as she unbuttoned her pajamas.
– I know, I know. Satsuki made quite a fuss about it the other day.
Moroha responded, mixing a yawn into it while putting on the jacket.
The winter vacation at Akane Academy began on the 27th rather than the 25th, so neither Eve nor the very day of Christmas were holidays, so they couldn’t enjoy themselves leisurely.
– There will be a house party at Mari-onee-chan’s apartment desu. I was told that Moroha is invited too desu.
Maya continued talking as she put the clothes that Moroha and she had taken off into the laundry basket.
– Really? A house party?
Moroha recalled as he handed over the underwear, thighs and a pair of tabi to Maya who came back.

While it wasn’t something one would call a “party”, he celebrated Christmas with his married aunt every year.
Only on that day, a big cake was bought, his sweet tooth aunt made her eyes sparkle and his uncle stealthily endured the wine he wanted to drink.
Moroha knew that, and of course Moroha never begged to have a present, but it wasn’t dissatisfying at all, even if it was in the middle of winter, the little house was very warm; he spent Holy Nights in a satisfied mood.
He couldn’t celebrate it with them this year, but it would be a lie to say he wasn’t lonely.
What did his married aunt think? Moroha was now in a position where he could send her an allowance, so at least he wanted them to eat cake and drink wine as much as they wanted, and to enjoy a happy night.
– Hmm, does Maya have a party every year?
– Certainly not nanodesu. Until last year, I was alone with Mari-onee-chan, we spent lonely Christmas Eves desu.
– Hahaha… then I have no other choice but to join you, huh.
– Satsuki-onee-san and Shizuno-onee-san will be invited desu. Leshya-onee-san and Haruka-onee-san will be invited desu. And Sohpie-onee-san too──
Although she wore a dress, her long hair got in the way; Maya counted as she squirmed in the clothes.
– Wait, wait. I get your feelings of being eager about it, but a number of people like that won’t fit in, don’t you think?
Moroha retorted as he helped her to put the dress on.
He grasped the size of the room because he had visited the apartment of the school principal.
If their intention was to relax and be calm and comfortable, then maybe four or five people were the limit.
Maya was small, so maybe another person could come.
– A sound argument nanodesu.
Maya, who wore a dress, poked her head together with an “ehehe”.
– And Momo-senpai said she had class and a Christmas trip that day.
– Well then, I will invite Satsuki-onee-san, Shizuno-onee-san and Leshya-onee-san desu.
– Okay. I’ll go tell them today.
As they had that conversation, Moroha joined hands with Maya and headed to the cafeteria.
Along the way, they bumped heads with Kammie-senpai in the corridor,
– Can you not walk holding hands every single time!? Are you a beast with its wings abreast or something!?
He shouted as he pointed at their backs, but they surely were evasive.
Rather, he could get used to it.
And after arriving at the school.
– ──Like I was saying, will you come too?
Using the time before the morning homeroom, Moroha explained to them.

– Eh□□□□□□…
The one who showed a dissatisfied attitude was Ranjou Satsuki.
– Oh well…
The one who showed a thoughtful face seen from the side was Urushibara Shizuno.
Moroha's desk was at the very end of the center row of the classroom.
The two girls sat on the top of it from the left and right, turning half of their bodies in the direction of the seated Moroha.
They pressed their shoulders against each other very naturally; that sort of thing was an absolutely impossible sight at the beginning, when they enrolled.
– Satsuki won't go to the party?
– It's not like I'm totally against it. But it's my first Christmas after reuniting with Moroha, so I want to spend it with Nii-sama privately.
– I'm sorry? Moroha planned to have a dinner with me at a hotel that day.
– Huuuuh? Didn't you say that nonsense in your dreams?
Suddenly, Satsuki hit Shizuno's shoulder with her own shoulder.
– By saying something like spending Christmas with Nii-sama privately, aren't you going back to being an elementary school student?
Responding to that, Shizuno hit Satsuki's shoulder with her own shoulder.
That was, so to speak, the ritual to start a battle.
– It can't be helped! We were still separated from each other when we were in elementary school!
– I'm not pointing out that kind of problem. As a senior high school student, not being able to be apart from your Onii-chan is laughable, you know?
– Your statement was nothing appropriate for a senior high school either! You just wanted to say hotel, no?
– Ara? Nowadays, senior high school students usually use something like hotel restaurants, don't they?
– Well… that's… y—ah, anyway, you're bragging again! I knew it.
– Oh Satsuki, you're so outdated ♪.
– Don't say that, smiling broadly. I'm way too mad right now.
– I'm just kidding though?
Bump* *Bump, the two off them struck their shoulder against each other while having a trivial quarrel.
– Stop already…. Everyone is watching….
Moroha covered his face with his hands.
As soon as he thought they were on good terms, this happened.
Fortunately, they agreed to a ceasefire and behaved themselves.
– Well, for that reason, Satsuki.
Shizuno, who showed a small dimple on her face, began to say as if chiding.
– Excuse me? I don't get what "for that reason" means.
– Don't you think that spending Christmas with Moroha alone will result in not only me appearing, but also enemy after enemy appearing, and the New Year will begin as we fight?

– Uuh… that may be true…
– That’s why, wouldn’t it be more meaningful to have an enjoyable party at the school principal’s home?
– … I… get it.
– It would be pitiable if Satsuki-san was buried and frozen in the snow alone while Moroha and I have a lighthearted talk at a restaurant.
– T-t-t-t-that’s not going to happen!
– I’m joking. By the way, does Satsuki have experience with Christmas parties at friends’ houses?
– ……. I don’t.
Satsuki, who was a hardcore loner, became smaller in an instant and pouted.
Moroha smiled wryly and rubbed the left hand of his □younger sister□.
As Shizuno also rubbed her opposite hand,
– It’s the same for me. Every year, the Urushibara head family invites guests, a grand party is held, but I’m so tired of making myself pleasant to the elegant old men and women with titles.
– It’s because they don’t like you, do they?
Probably because she was embarrassed for being suddenly treated kindly, Satsuki attacked her verbally with a thrust.
– That’s true. Anyway, let’s have fun together, I look forward to it.
– … Okay. I’m also participating. Can you tell them that, Moroha?
– Yeah. Maya will be happy too.
Moroha circled their columns in the memo boo in his mind.
Then Shizuno suddenly brought her mouth near his ear,
– As for Christmas Eve, you’re free, yes?
– Don’t steal a march on me as soon as you say that, Urushibaraaaa.
– It’s hard to say that pricking up your ears and listening to people’s secret talk is elegant, you know, Satsuki?
– Because I heard you without even standing up! You said that now to be intentionally heard!
Bump *Bump*, they hit their shoulders again.
Where did the good atmosphere that was here seconds ago end up going to?
– Are you on good terms or on bad terms, which one is it…?
In Japan, though, there was a hopeless expression, which said □the more you quarrel, the closer you are□.
The gazes of the classmates who surrounded them at a distance were still warm today.
The innocent chuckling and the pleasant attitude made Moroha feel really uneasy.
Making them apologize with □Sorry for making a fuss□ was rather refreshing.
In the past, they envied him and felt annoyed at him, but now it transformed into the annual event of Class 1 – 1, it was around this time that they felt

the much-anticipated holiday, as if to say 「What kind of battle will they show today?」
Moroha was at wit's end──
– Guys, the bell rang already!
With the entrance of Tarou Tanaka, the homeroom teacher, the warm air was swept away.
Everyone in the class noisily sat on their seats.
Granting a break to the quarrel, Satsuki panicked and Shizuno elegantly returned to her seat.
Everyone was in a posture ready to take homeroom.
Then faced Tanaka who was going to teach──finally noticing the strange occurrence, the startled ones appeared one after another.
Moroha also opened his eyes wide lightly.
In a suddenly noisy atmosphere, the whole class fixedly stared at Tanaka's face.
They focused their gazes even more and noticed that his left cheek was swelling up in a bright red color.
As if someone had hit him hard.
– Hahaha, your teacher is troubled too for making you be surprised like this.
Looking uncomfortable, Tanaka scratched his cheek, inadvertently the left one, and because of that, he let out a small 「Ouch」.
He could hear chuckles and laughing voices from all over the class; the tense mood eased at once.
– Teacher, what happened to your cheek?
Satsuki raised her hand before anyone else and asked.
– My wife is scary, you see.
Tanaka replied, playing the fool, and this time a burst of laughter took place.
Jeering such as 「A marital quarrel!?」 and 「How uncool, Sensei」 flew, and Tanaka jokingly said 「You guys will understand the feelings of your teacher soon」, causing even more laughter.
Moroha unintentionally smiled and watched over Tanaka and everyone's silly exchange.
There was no way that it was really a marital quarrel. Because Tanaka didn't say it, questioning about that was nothing but the peak of tastelessness.
As the smile of the class didn't die out, the healthy homeroom started.
Without there being something in particular, Tanaka told the matters to be communicated in normal operation.
Moroha aimlessly listened to that.
When he turned his eyes out the window, all the leaves of the garden trees had fallen, leaving them completely naked.
A strong wind occasionally blew, making the window glass sound drearily.
The time of year when the heating in the classroom was appreciated.
The calendar was entering December.

More than a month had passed since that fierce fight, that Japanese-English-French joint operation.
Edward and Charles returned to their countries with their subordinates long ago.
He had heard that the people who were set free hadn’t woken up yet and were hospitalized in medical facilities prepared by the Japanese government.
It seemed that various investigations were being conducted by the Japanese Division to wake them up, but the results weren’t satisfactory.
From an investigative point of view, only one month had passed, so it was too early to be pessimistic.
On the other hand, no 「Metaphysicals」 had appeared anywhere in the world for the past month.
If this had happened in the past, one could have been delighted and say 「How peaceful!」, but now that the existence of an underground organization that controlled monsters had been confirmed, this silence was nothing but ominous.
It wasn’t something unexpected, there surely had to be the unreasonable arbitrariness of someone in this.
Additionally, a headache-inducing fact had been established: There were as many 「Metaphysicals」 as the number of people whose souls were pulled out and remained asleep.
That number was a little more than 100.
Five of them were highly likely to be Evil Spirit class.
The 「Saviors」 who were kidnapped by “Invisible” and found in a soulless state were five.
He had heard that each Division was in a higher alert status than before; being in a state where one could sleep without fear was impossible.
Akane Academy was free from an air of tension of that degree, but when needed, Moroha and every member of *Strikers* would have to make an urgent dispatch using 「Transportal」.
—As he indulged in such thoughts.
Suddenly, his mobile phone that was in silent mode vibrated.
He stealthily and quickly checked under the desk.
It was an email from Shizuno.
The subject was 「I missed my chance to say this before but」.
He thought that if it was a joke again, he would ignore her, but he examined the text just in case.
「Last night, Nii-san came back from Tokyo with an interesting story」
It started with a sentence like that, so this seemed to be a serious matter.
By the way, her “Nii-san” was the board chairman.
「The organization that controls the Metaphysicals is called the Six Wing Conference aka SIX WING」
(Really…?)
Moroha was strongly interested in it and scanned it seriously.

「The Japanese Division is also temporarily reinforcing the Internal Audit Office and looking for clues of that organization in a frenzy, but as expected, it looks like it's not going to be that easy. The same goes for other Divisions, there has been no beneficial information so far. Apparently, the enemy is composed of a small number of people, moreover, why wouldn't they hide underground, freely using their *Ancestral Arts?*」
He read the full text and emailed a question back.
「They use *Ancestral Arts*, so that confirms those guys are Saviors?」
He waited for a minute and a reply came.
「The White Knight Organization calls them "Demons." Apostates」
I see, they're trying not to call that group 「Saviors」 so that the world isn't driven into chaos, huh.
The email of Shizuno continued.
「Nii-san and the other executives seems to have kept it a secret, I, too, am hearing this for the first time. Don't be surprised, alright? Four years ago, there was a case in which a small fraction of the White Knight Organization caused a rebellion. At that time, Sir Edward named the rebels "Demons"」
(Rebellion, huh… that's another big incident)
Moroha raised one eyebrow.
It was no wonder that the White Knight Organization didn't make it public. If it was known that 「Saviors」 were the ones who caused the rebellion, the norms of order would be in jeopardy.
Maybe the *Six Heads* got desperate and suppressed it, and the fact that almost nothing was known even now was certainly a good execution on their part. In such a case, there was no doubt that even Charles and Lightning Empress cooperated without grumbling about it. That sort of thing came into his mind.
「Those rebels and the enigmatic organization that had been creating Metaphysicals for a long time combined, forming *Six Wings*, don't you think?」
「Even though they searched without leads coming out, how was all that ascertained?」
Finding it strange, Moroha sent an email.
And a reply came right away.
「It's what the testimony of Kashiwaba Gen'ichi says」
Moroha also remembered that name.
He was the former Internal Audit Office Head used as the core of the Archfiend "Shade".
That testimony was probably those screams he was raising with utmost effort when the soul of Kashiwaba Gen'ichi was released after defeating *Shade*.
His vocabulary contained too many words Moroha didn't know, moreover, it was left unfinished, so understanding it accurately was difficult. Even catching his words was difficult. However, there was a member of the Internal Audit Office and a leader of the French Division there, and because

they had a lot of background knowledge, they could understand it and bring back that valuable information.
「That Kashiwaba Gen'ichi was able to obtain a good clue?」
「It seems like he got into an argument at the main office, but it is unclear how he could obtain it. It looks like because he was afraid of the spies of *Six Wings* hidden inside the Japanese Division, he was conducting his own investigation without telling anyone」
Kashiwaba Gen'ichi seemed to be still missing, which meant his cautiousness backfired.
In any case, it was an everlasting interesting conversation.
At any rate, Moroha had heard the word 「Demon」 by accident in a completely different place.
The quiet man he met by chance in the library when he was trapped in the mansion of "the witch of the prison".
Even that misanthropist called himself a 「Demon」. Who on earth was he?
As expected, was he related to the 「Demons」and the *Six Wings*?
As he carefully thought about it, he got another email.
It was not from Shizuno—but from Satsuki.
The subject was 「I failed to mention this a moment ago!」
To think even Satsuki had something important to say.
He opened the email and turned serious eyes to it.
「Look forward to Christmas presents! There will be amazingly good ones!」
Moroha almost fell prostrated on the desk.
(Now that she says that…)
He sent back an email as he gave a wry smile.
「Go for the usual stuff. Things too expensive or elaborate are prohibited. Something appropriate for a high school student」
And.
It was easy to imagine how reckless would Satsuki be without giving her a warning.

Lunch time came and Moroha went to the adjacent class before eating lunch.
He looked for Leshya aka Elena Arshavina.
It seemed that she was on class duty, he quickly found her gathering everyone's notebooks.
She noticed him when she was about to exit to the hallway, carrying a bunch of notebooks.
She immediately showed a reserved smile and,
– Do you have something to tell me, Moroha?

She accelerated her feet and drew near him.
-It’s something small, but… are you bringing those to the staff room?
– Yes. I was assigned by the teacher-dono just now. A very important mission of mine.
– Should I take care of it?
– Impossible. Otherwise, I would be neglecting my mission.
– Hahah. Leshya is too serious, isn’t she? Then, I’ll carry half of it.
– Ah.
When Moroha got half of the notebooks on his own, Leshya raised a surprised voice.
– At times like this, you are always pushy.
As she said so, her expression seemed to be of happiness.
The two of them lined up and headed to the staff room.
Along the way, Moroha began to talk.
– Do you have any plans for Christmas Eve?
– Whaaa!?
Leshya suddenly screamed.
She dropped the bunch of notebooks she carried, causing them to scatter in the corridor.
No sooner she made her peculiar-to-Caucasians and transparent-looking skin flush than,
– I-I’d like you to not surprise me, Moroha!
She fled to the wall and shook her hands and neck as if saying “no, not at all” as she slid down like she was falling on her backside.
– I’m the one who is surprised.

Moroha made his eyes blink in surprise at this very unexpected reaction.
– Moroha is the one to blame here for saying something strange all of a sudden!
Leshya continued waving her hands and saying “awawa”, her face still all bright red.
– Aren’t I just asking about your plans for Christmas…?
– I’d like you not to look down on me as an ignorant young girl! Realizing that everyone in class was getting nervous, I properly investigated what a Japanese Christmas looked like. When it comes to December 24th in Japan, young men and women pursue each other’s body like dogs in heat, indulging in blasphemous pleasures; in short, a burning, ardent, once-a-year sexual night, isn’t it!? When a man asks “what are your plans for Christmas Eve?”, it’s a jargon that means “I want to sleep with you”, and a woman replying that she’s free it’s a sign that she’s giving herself to him, no?
– From which 5ch did you learn such biased information?
– Even if I think you are nice, I think premarital sexual relations are not good.
– I haven’t thought about that, so don’t yell out loud scandalous things like that please!
Moroha begged with all his might, but it was too late.
It was the unfortunate time for lunch break, the corridor was crowded with students coming and going to buy lunch.
Every boy and girl stopped walking, they concentrated and perfectly heard the words of Leshya.
– Hey, did you hear that? Haimura is trying to deceive and assail an innocent overseas student.…
– What an asshole.… No matter how much of an S-Rank he is, being excused or not is…
– Haimura-kun willfully approached her, and here I believed he was a sincere person.… To think he was really like that…
– Wait a minute!? D-doesn’t that mean that Maya-chan, who lives with him, he long ago…?
– The atmosphere is bad here, let’s move quickly, Leshya!
Moroha picked up all the notebooks that had fallen using Godlike Movement and left at a quick pace as if to shake off the gazes full of thorns.
He desperately explained to Leshya who followed him.
– It’s all a misunderstanding. That’s a custom in a small part of Japan, the real Christmas is nothing but a proper festival.
– Is, is that so…? I was also doubting how extremely strange it was.
– See? Of course, it’s extremely strange. I wanted to confirm it before you shouted though.…
– By the way, that custom we were speaking of, how concrete is that small fraction?

– M-maybe around Tokyo?
– I see… Tokyo is a terrifying place, isn't it?
Leshya nodded with a serious look and made a sound with her throat.
Moroha just devotedly apologized in his heart to Tokyo for disgracing it without reason.
– Well then, Moroha, you had planned to invite me to that festival?
– Yes. There will be a home party at principal's apartment. Satsuki and Shizuno will also come, you know?
– I will be incredibly happy if Shizuno comes too.
Moroha thought 「What about Satsuki?」 in his mind, but he didn't have the courage to ask.
– By all means, I'd like you to let me participate.
– Alright. I'll be calling you again for further details.
– This will be my first time experiencing this festival called Christmas. I'm really looking forward to it.
– … Is it like that because you were immersed in training and didn't have time to enjoy the festival?
– No. The Christmas day in Russia isn't that exciting. In the first place, the date is different form Japan, January 7th is Christmas.
– Really? Is it that different?
──As they chatted like that, they arrived at the staff room.
– Hmm?
There, Moroha found a rare assorted duo.
In front of the staff room, Tanaka, the homeroom teacher, and Isurugi Jin, the captain of *Strikers*, were standing, deep in some kind of talk.
Moreover, Isurugi suddenly bowed deeply toward Tanaka.
Tanaka tried to make him raise his face, saying 「It is not your fault」, but Isurugi didn't hear him.
What was happening there?
Moroha hurriedly delivered the notebooks to the desk of two teachers and returned with Leshya.
He asked Tanaka who looked dispirited.
– What happened?
– Oh, Haimura…
– This is embarrassing, we were seen.
Isurugi, who raised his head, and Tanaka made awkward faces. But,
– No, it's not a big deal.
Tanaka immediately corrected himself. As he scratched the cheek that wasn't swelling up.
With that, Moroha understood.
Maybe Isurugi had something to do with the swelling of Tanaka's cheek.
Isurugi, who noticed Moroha's eyes fixed on the cheek,
– My younger brother raised his hand to Sensei. It is a serious thing.
He answered frankly with a heavy voice.
The embarrassment of his relative, that surely was hard to say.

As one would expect, it was becoming of the honest captain.
It certainly should have been a regrettable thing.
His sunken cheeks were much more stiffened and sterner than usual.
– Did he come to school?
Moroha had heard that he refused to go to school.
– No, that’s not it. Tanaka-sensei has gone out of his way to visit him at my house, he has given him all kinds of teachings.
– Although you say that, I’ve been busy so I can only go there once a week.
– Please don’t be so humble. He has abused the generosity of the teacher….
The hand of Isurugi, who made a fist, was trembling.
And closed his eyes tightly.
If he hadn’t done so, the anger would have just ended up blowing out of his eyes.
Affected by the silent anger of Isurugi, Moroha perceived how raging Isurugi’s heart was and how much effort had to be imposed to restrain it.
Simple words and consolation wouldn’t make it.
I see, I ended up hearing something embarrassing.
Moroha did nothing but scratch his head.
However, Leshya, who was beside him, inclined her head to the side,
– The conversation is still hard for me to get. Will you let me hear the details about it?
As expected of Leshya-san, she ignored the mood and asked a question.
From a brandished-aloft-in-a-big-way form to a totally straight blazing fastball, Isurugi and Tanaka looked at each other and put a bitter-looking smile on their faces.
– Well… this happened yesterday.
Then the two of them began to speak falteringly.
Moroha carefully listened to that summarized story with Leshya—

Isurugi Jin’s younger brother—Gen, was secluded himself in a mountain under the instruction of Tanaka.
A special training ground for mountain battle simulation, located about 30 kilometers north of the prefectural road from the school. It was the third day when he used it by himself.
To begin with, it was a restricted place situated deep in the mountains, there were no roads running at the foot of the mountain, no radio waves reached it either.
As he looked at the sunset, Gen talked with his older brother via cell phone.
– The second school term is about to finish, isn’t it, Aniki? You remember our promise, right?

At that time, when Gen, against his better judgment, flared up and punched his father.
His older brother, who returned to his parents' house, scolded him for what he had done and when he was going to go back to school.
He had also suggested he should change schools if he didn't feel like going back.
He wasn't kidding. If he was transferred to another school, he wouldn't be a 「Savior」 anymore. He would end up losing the honor and money of his future completely. Gen had no intention of doing so.
However, Gen had a reasonable claim: he couldn't go to school without being ashamed unless the disgrace Haimura Moroha made him experience was cleared away──that was all.
Then his older brother said:
If that is the case, settle the dispute with Haimura Moroha during the second semester.
If you can't win, you will transfer to another school.
A promise he forcibly had to accept.
He was honestly angry at that time, but he didn't care about such small things.
– Kukuh, I'll definitely take my revenge on Haimura!
Gen declared so, sounding full of himself.
「Don't give up and keep training, alright, Gen?」
– Absolutely! I'll show Aniki and those guys from the school that I've changed in these six months.
「Did you follow the teachings of Tanaka-sensei to the letter?」
– Hehe, of course I did. Actually, his method of teaching is quite good, you know? I approve of him.
「Is that so? You really tried your best, Gen」
– I can draw out the power I drew before multiplied by three. Haimura is just a pushover. I'll beat him up, make him go down on his hands and knees and trample his head underfoot with my shoes, hyahahahaha!
Gen got overly elated and laughed out loud.
Immediately, a deep sigh was heard from the other side of the telephone receiver.
All the warmth from the voice of his older brother suddenly fell out,
– Before you challenge Haimura-kun, would you try having a bout with me?
Gen gasped.
Changing his attitude in a great haste,
– S-stop joking around, Anikii…. There's no way I can beat Aniki, can I? I'm not going to push my luck that far, and have I gone against Aniki even once? I haven't, right? Come on, forgive me…
He became menial and bowed to the person whose face couldn't see.
A deep, deep sigh was heard from the other side of the telephone receiver.
– All right. I will try requesting Haimura-kun for a bout. That's something I can do for you.

Hearing so, Gen was relieved.
– Are you okay with the match happening next week, Gen? It will take up my time to get Haimura-kun to accept a duel with someone less skilled. And I ask you to restrain your aggressiveness.
– Hey, hey, are you telling me Aniki that you think I'll lose again? What the hell, Aniki? While the joke was damn bad, today you've been joking for quite a while, you know?
Without bearing how funny it was, Gen laughed heartily.
His older brother ignored that and told him.
– If you get serious, I won't talk about changing schools anymore. You can take many chances until you graduate. Whoever laughs at it, I won't laugh.
And he arbitrarily ended the phone call.
Toot*, *Toot*, *Toot, the disconnected sound resounded in vain.
– What the…? As usual, what my **fucking** Aniki says doesn't make sense.
As if having his excitement shut down, Gen cursed.
Irritated, he wildly hit the trees around him.
Clad in a blood-like dark red *prana*, he mowed them down one after another with 【Strength】.
When he smashed around 10 of them and felt satisfied—he heard an applause.
Surprised, he looked over his shoulder, Tanaka was standing there.
Without him noticing.
He had heard that he would come and see how things were going before descending the mountain, but making his presence disappear completely like this was bad for his heart.
– Yo, Isurugi-kun. Your *prana* has improved considerably these days. It seems the results of carrying out simple and basic training to completion are showing up.
– Y-yeah. I guess.
Isurugi bluffed and tried to cover up his inner shaking.
Appearing to have time, he sat down on the trunk of a tree that had just been knocked down and waited for his heart to calm down.
Still,
– I think that your current self has the ability of a C-Rank.
He was amazed again by Tanaka's remark.
– Really!?
He half-rose to his feet and asked again as if clinging to it.
– Of course. Your efforts in the last six months paid off. Quite a lot I'd say.
– Heh… heheheh… kukuku… kuhah, kuhahaha…
A pleasant feeling suddenly bubbled out from the bottom of his body,
– Hi————————aha ha ha ha ha ha haaa!
In the end, Gen laughed out loud.
He was thrilled.
The feelings of happiness welling up one after another didn't stop.

– There’s almost nobody who can become C-Rank in a year, isn’t that right, Sensei!?
– That’s right. Moreover, there was no child last year who became one before the end of the second semester. The golden generation, which your older brother is part of; consist of 5 people if I remember correctly.
– Amaaaaaaaaaazing. I’m super amaaaaaaaaaaazing.
Without bearing it, Gen looked at the sky and yelled.
His willpower replenished more and more; *prana* seemed to be overflowing from his whole body.
Now, he could show his strength and return to school.
His older brother would certainly get a better opinion of him.
And—
– This time, I’ll beat that bastard Haimura to death.
Gen declared as he licked his lips.
In his imagination, he hit hard the face of Haimura Moroha many times and pictured that bluffing, boring girl crying and shouting in his mind.
As he was immersed in such a dark delight,
– W-wait, Isurugi-kun.
Tanaka interjected, looking confused.
Looking at his confusion, Gen laughed mockingly,
– I’m not going to wait, Sensei. Because I’m going to take revenge on that trash as soon as possible, my patience ends today! You feel like you didn’t train me for something like that, but it’s too late. I don’t care in the least, and don’t think you’ll stop me!
– You’re wrong, Isurugi-kun—
– Huuh!? Why am I wrong? Shut up already!
He had no need to get direct guidance from this middle-aged man anymore, and had no need to behave modestly; Gen showed his innate roughness and threatened him.
Tanaka recoiled and replied as he wiped the sweat with a handkerchief.
– Haimura-kun is already an S-Rank…
Gen was unable to understand what he was told.
– It’s impossible for you to win. You will never win. To think you were planning such a thing… If you had told me before, I would have stopped you…. What I ended up doing is really inexcusable….
Tanaka looked apologetic, unable to let go of the handkerchief.
The words and meaning of the homeroom teacher gradually penetrated him.
He didn’t want to understand them…
As strong as a curse, they tried to gnaw at his mind and heart.
– …… You’re lying.
– I’m not lying, Isurugi-kun.
– …… You’re lying.
– It’s so sudden you can’t believe it. But you’ll rapidly understand. You can try asking everyone at school.
– You’re lying!

– Even if you throw a tantrum, the reality isn’t exactly what you expected it to be…
– Shut up! You’re just telling liiiiiiiiiiiiiiiies!
Gen flared up and sprung at Tanaka together with a scream.
He raised his fist with an angry voice and hit his homeroom teacher.
Tanaka was surprised, his body ended up hardening, he couldn’t dodge it.
He flew like a wood chip and didn’t move while lying down on the ground.
– Heh…. Serves you right, you goddamn liar pretending to be a teacher.
Gen spat at Tanaka who stretched in the form of the □ kanji.
– How can I believe such stupid words? Even that monster is an A-Rank….
There’s no way Haimura is on top of him.*
*TN: Monster is the furigana reading for Aniki.
In a fit of anger, he kicked flying Tanaka who didn’t put resistance many times.
Then, when Gen felt somewhat relieved, left the place, leaving the homeroom teacher behind.
He went to the depths of the dreary, overgrowing trees.
He ran at full speed like a beast.
The evening sky was burning like the horrors of war.
After listening to the story of Isurugi Jin and Tanaka, Moroha thought honestly.
(That guy hasn’t grown up in the least…)
For Moroha, a first-year high school student, this period of time of six months didn’t feel short at all.
Isurugi Jin cleared his throat and bowed to Tanaka again.
– As soon as I find him, I’ll make sure my younger brother apologizes.
– No, you don’t really have to worry about that. I’m a teacher after all, I’m used to the mischievousness of students. More importantly, I’m worried about what Gen-kun is doing now. He didn’t return home, did he?
– That guy. He thinks I’ll scold him when he comes home, so he’s probably running from place to place. However, he has nowhere to go, nor does he have the courage to go far without money, I’d say he’s hiding in this area. After school, I’ll look for him.
– I will try asking other teachers to search for him as well.
– I can’t allow myself to keep bothering you with the matter of my younger brother. Please let me do this myself.
– Don’t burden yourself too much because of Gen.
Tanaka frowned and nodded like he comprehended.
Then Isurugi Jin turned his face to Moroha,
– My younger brother is very short-tempered, so it’s very likely that he will appear in front of you. At that time, I’d like you to call me immediately without taking on him.
– Understood.
Moroha sensed the difficult situation of Isurugi Jin and purposely saluted with a friendly attitude.

With that, his Senpai made a somewhat relieved face.
– I’m sorry. And thank you.
– I’m indebted to Senpai, so it’s nothing.
Isurugi Jin was feeble and Moroha deliberately brimmed with vigor; they both smiled at each other.
However, Leshya, who was beside him, hit her own chest.
– Please be assured that this trouble will never reach Moroha. If that ruffian tries to put one finger on Moroha, my cursed sword won’t stay silent.
As one would expect of Leshya-san, she ignored the mood and cut into the conversation.
The smiling faces of Moroha and Isurugi Jin turned into bitter ones.

Chapter 2: Santa Claus is a bit early

A few days later.
Moroha used his holiday to go shopping in the shopping district in front of the station.
He wanted to go and buy Christmas presents for the participants of the party.
For Satsuki, Shizuno, Leshya, Maya and Mari, and for now, he had to be prepared for Haruka, the sixth participant.
Since he was sending allowance to his aunt and her husband, he honestly couldn't afford to spend too much. He thought that it would certainly be something like a gift exchange party, so each person would get one, but,
– I hate such tastelessness! I want to give Nii-sama what Nii-sama wants!
– For the present a certain somebody wants, the battle of women who wash off blood with blood will surely break out, don't you agree?
And, claimed by the Satsuki-Shizuno Alliance, Moroha consented.
(I can't spend too much money, but for that same reason, I have to be smart about what I want to give them)
As he kept that in mind, he first looked for which store to enter.
By the way, Moroha was alone.
He invited everyone to go shopping with him, but he was first refused by Satsuki who said 「We want to be excited until we open the lid, wondering what we'll get!」
Everyone seemed to want to keep it a secret until that very day.
The main street was nothing but Christmas.
Red artwork and white artwork called the attention everywhere.
The people walking down the road were mostly couples.
There were also people standing here and there, touting and distributing leaflets dressed as Santa, and doing sales with smiling faces with the lovers.
Among them, he found a female Santa Claus who was noticeably motivated.
Tube top and miniskirt Santa clothes under this wintry sky.
Even though she wore a Santa hat and long gloves with fur, the amount of exposed skin was unusual.
She wasn't selling anything; she was striding on the main street without looking aside.
Was it his imagination?

It seemed that she was heading straight toward Moroha….
Moreover, that face that became clearer as she got closer was kind of familiar….
Ultimately, the female Santa stood in front of Moroha.
She had a blank facial expression that seemed to want to make the sound of 「Bohee」,
– Oh. The one going over there, is it you, Haimoro?
– It's you, Nelly…
– I didn't notice you at all until I got near you.
– Liar. You came straight to me at full speed, didn't you?
Moroha turned half-closed eyes to the slightly older Onee-san who he met for the first time in about two months.
Her name was Shiroi Usako.
Without knowing what would be drawn from the result of the change, she said to him to call her by her nickname "Nelly".
She was also the self-proclaimed administrator of the mansion of "the witch of the prison", where Moroha met her.
– Why are you here?
– I'm on a trip.
– What happened to the management of the mansion?
– I quit. I had enough.
– You sure have a lot of freedom…
It was an incredibly awful reply.
– You say you quit, but how did you get out of that mansion?
– A kind person got me out.
– Kindness has its limit too…
Moroha glared at her with scornful eyes.
Eyes of reproach stared at Nelly who had no intention of answering seriously.
However, Nelly wasn't someone to be taken lightly, and reacted to it composedly, a blank expression on her face.
If anything,
– To think I would meet Haimoro by chance at my destination. This is a miracle. I feel it's fate.
She shamelessly began to say such a thing.
– Is that true? Weren't you finding me with that intention from the beginning?
This Onee-san had the bad habit of lying as if breathing; she was sneaky.
– Haimoro is being surprisingly way too self-conscious.
– Uuh.
– That is a lie. It is as you say. I was looking for Haimoro. Are you happy?
Saying so, Nelly suddenly hugged Moroha's left arm.
– W-what are you after?
– I came to see you because I wanted to see you. That's all.

Together with that honeyed phrase, the facial expression of Nelly changed for a moment.
Coquettish upturned eyes that only an adult woman could show.
Becoming dejected, Moroha looked down at that face of her, but at the same time, something unthinkable came into his field of vision.
Despite being short, Nelly had very glamorous proportions.
Thanks to that, when sneaking a look at her from above, he ended up seeing the deep cleavage from the chest of the tube top completely.
Moroha hurriedly averted his eyes.
– Where were you looking just now?
– Ne-Ne-Ne-Ne-Ne-Nelly's face?
– Haimoro, it is rude to look at a person's face and look away.
– Uuh.
– Haimoro, it is cruel to look at a person's face and look away.
– I'm sorry. My heart pounded when catching sight of your chest.
– Very well. A reward for an honest person.
– Don't try to bring your chest down in front of the public.
– That excites me more.
– I forgot you were a female molesteeeer.
When they first met, she wandered around in her underwear.
– But Haimoro is embarrassed. Shall we continue in the karaoke over there?
– We aren't continuing anythiiiiing.
Moroha wanted to run away with all his might.
However, and without a moment's delay, Nelly clung to his left arm, without letting him get away.
Thanks to that, her abundant breasts were pressed against him, they seemed they were about to become comical.
Moroha abandoned his escape and hung his head where he was.
– Haimoro is worth making fun of. Hey, you do have talent as a reactionist. Good job.
Nelly put her right thumb up with a vague face.
– It was worth coming all the way here to see you.
– You really came all the way here…
If only she came for such a meaningless reason.
When he lost strength, Moroha suddenly noticed that they were attracting the gazes of the passersby.
Seen from someone unrelated to them, they were probably a "not-good composition" in which a student is involved with an indecent Onee-san.
– Do we go somewhere else?
Moroha said with kindness.
It wasn't like he wanted to hand Nelly to a police officer.
– Will you go on a date with me?
– Why am I going to do that…?
– Go on date with me.
– Now you're saying it bluntly…

– I’m free now. And bored.
Saying so, Nelly changed her posture just a little.
She entwined her arm around Moroha’s left arm, and at the same time, they looked like they were walking side by side.
The moving from one place to another itself was an indication that they had agreed.
Moroha led the Santa Onee-san and started walking.
Reasonable-ish quick steps, even for a girl.
To shake all eyes, they ran away to the back street.
As he prayed from the bottom of his heart—*I hope nobody from school sees us, please.*
It was a small street in the area.
Even though it was the shopping district in front of the station, the population dropped sharply if one went to the back street.
The need to worry about eyes gathering on them also decreased dramatically.
Moroha continued talking and walking around without a destination in particular while having his arm linked with Nelly.
– You clearly knew I was in this town, huh.
– You were wearing the uniform of Akane Academy before.
Nelly said, humming unconcernedly.
The person was already in a date mood, she was in a good mood.
However, her facial expression was as vague as usual.
– I’m a former Akane student.
– Is that so…?
Then Nelly was also a 「Savior」.
No, the place they met was only a place for those who were connected to the White Knight Organization, but he couldn’t tell because he had never seen her use 「Ancestral Arts」.
Nelly was a person with a friendly personality, and because that she served him—rather, helped him at the mansion for a week, Moroha didn’t think of her as a stranger.
Still, when it came to her, he realized that she didn’t know her.
And speaking of things he didn’t know, there was one more thing,
– You just said that you quit managing the mansion. What happened to Demon-san who was with you? I mean, who was that Demon-san in the first place?
Because it was a good opportunity, Moroha asked candidly.
To know whether or not that man with glasses who called himself *Demon* was related to *Six Wings*.
If it was about unexpected clues, then Nelly showing up was good fortune.
– You want to know?
Receiving a question back, Moroha assented in silence.
– If you have a date with me until I’m satisfied, then I’ll tell you at the end.

– Are you serious…?
Moroha tried to hold his head, but he couldn’t because Nelly’s arm was entwined with his left arm.
– There’s some shopping I have to do today…
– What will you buy?
– Christmas presents. Six of them.
– I excel at choosing gifts.
– Really?
He ended up speaking without thinking again.
– I love doing service. Both are the same. It’s important to take in consideration the feelings of the other person too.
Certainly, she was an Onee-san who played the fool, but when she helped him at the mansion, he was so scared of being broken as a person by her tremendous braveness.
– Do you know Marishiten? I heard that she’s Akane’s principal now.
– That could be no other than Mari, right…?
Where did the “Shiten” come from?
– The one who gave Marishiten her hat was me.
– Really?
Moroha was unconsciously impressed by this.
It made him think about listening to her seriously.
Although the pointy hat that the school principal always wore was an eccentric piece of fashion when normally thinking about it, it was also a fact that it oddly suited her.
Then again, he knew that the more the person in question carried it closer to her, the more important it was for her.
Moroha thought that Nelly’s confidence in choosing gifts could not be looked down on.
For that reason—
Moroha went to a department store of a local company as if he was pulled while linking arms with Nelly.
Unlike famous national stores, the atmosphere and price were casual, and the clientele was young too.
Well, after all, Nelly’s Santa look didn’t stand out too much, probably because it was crowded with couples and everyone was in their own world.
– What kind of person are you going to give a gift to?
– Now that you say that—
After trying thinking about it, Moroha thought that it would be surprisingly difficult to explain in detail who they were to someone who didn’t know them.
To begin with, he wanted to decide on a gift for Haruka, but he was troubled because he had no clue,
– Do you have a photo of that person?
– I do, but…
Moroha took out his mobile phone and showed Haruka in a photo he took.

It was one photo of Momo-senpai wearing uniform and who stuck out her hands to the front and panicked, saying 「It's embarrassing so don't take it!」
As soon as she saw it, the atmosphere that Nelly was clad in suddenly changed.
Her vague expression became tense and turned her transparent eyes like the ones of a diviner to the mobile screen.
And created a mystical atmosphere all of a sudden.
– Does this girl like to run?
– You could tell, huh.
– The shoes she's wearing have been used for a long time and are well-maintained.
Nelly showed a sharp discernment, making Moroha groan.
– Then, do I give her shoes as a gift? But aren't they too expensive?
– Practical things are appreciated by friends. But as a present for the opposite sex, that alone isn't enough.
Moroha felt a deep implication in the decisive words of Nelly.
– This girl self-deprecates because she looks like a boy even though she is cute, correct?
– How do you know that much…?
He thought it would be good to give the sign of clairvoyant to Nelly.
– It's decided.
– So fast.
Pulling the arm of Moroha, Nelly walked quickly.
They came to the cosmetics department on the first floor.
Nelly presented the product she took in her hand without hesitation.
It was a cream for UV protection.
– With this, even if she jogs every day, she will have the perfect protection. Let's protect her beautiful skin with Winter UV Care.
Nelly said something that sounded like a TV commercial.
However, Moroha was impressed.
Certainly, this was not only practical, but also included the suggestion that 「Momo-senpai is cute, so please take good care of yourself」. This was what "being smart" was all about.
– Can I look at you with a respectful gaze from today onwards?
– By all means.
As they cracked jokes each other, Moroha showed the next photo excitedly.
It was Satsuki.
She had her arms raised and folded, no, she was puffing up with pride; a pose photo just like a model.
– This girl surely is an ostentatious person. With a personality that cannot help gather the attention of her surroundings. But in reality, she has no friends, she's a loner.
– You really aren't a diviner?
Moroha was astonished.
With just a glance at the photo, she read Satsuki's nature.

– What do you think that I should give to the ostentatious loner-san?
– Girls like this do have strong points. She looks like a person who likes looking after others. And I'm sure she's fond of children.
– I see, I see. So?
– The present would be having Haimoro's baby.
– Why the indecent topic? Don't make me be disappointed just when I respected you.
– By the way, I don't like that. Be sure to use contraception, Haimoro.
– I won't do iiiit.
– Eh? Haimoro is a savage. How unexpected.
– It's a figure of speech! Do you get it!?
Moroha retorted with all his strength, but Nelly looked rather happy.
Remembering that at the mansion of "the witch of the prison" she terribly desired for conversation and the warmth of people, a feeling of sympathy passed through the mind of Moroha.
Lying down his arms and clearing his throat,
– What do you think she really likes?
– She probably likes this type of stuffed toy.
– Now that you mention it…
He visited Satsuki's room several times, but he remembered being lots of them lined up.
He looked for the section and bought one.
– Then let's go.
– Next, please.
Moroha showed a picture of Shizuno.
– This girl has a secret confidence in her hair. Even though she has a personality that doesn't appear to show off, she wears a headband and hair accessories properly.
This was what "understanding a woman's heart" meant. Splendid.
– OK, let's attack in that direction.
– If Haimoro gives one to her, I'm sure she will gladly wear it. Her face is the face that feels a reason for living when tied up.
– What kind of face is that…?
Because he rapidly got anxious, he wanted her to not add questionable comments.
– Also, it's cute that in one spot of the hair that this girl is proud of, there's an unruly hair. If I had the chance, I would like to touch it.
– You will go to hell and back so let's stop. Okay? Do you promise me?
Moroha advised her from the bottom of his heart.
He searched for the section again and bought a headband. Hair accessories looked too cheap when price was taken into account, but he could buy an elegant headband for the same price.
He imagined Shizuno being delighted with that blank look on her face, and shopping became fun.
He went for the next in high spirits.

– How about this girl, Nelly-sensei?
A photo of Leshya who was very shy with Shizuno.
– A beautiful girl like an elf.
– You have a discerning eye, Sensei.
– A girl who lacks of worldly senses like an elf.
– As expected of Sensei.
Moroha was once again astounded by Nelly's keen insight.
– Leshya couldn't live a human life this whole time because of the Russian Division.
– I agree.
– Now, she came to Akane not long ago and is enjoying the school life for the first time.
– If so, then she should be too happy now, her feelings floating. Only when the school life goes hand in hand with her real feelings, this girl can become *normal*.
– And to do that?
– She'll have to keep a diary, it's what I would use.
– I see…. But will Leshya keep a diary?
– If Haimoro gives her a diary, she should keep it cheerfully.
– Is that so?
But this was when he had to try believing in the keen insight of Nelly-sensei.
Moroha went to buy a diary. A reliable, shiny and new bound book, suitable as a gift.
– Then, give me your expert opinion of this girl, please.
A photo of Maya who showed an angelic smile on her face and who was held in Moroha's arms.
As soon as he showed it, Nelly held her tongue.
She gazed at the mobile phone with intense concentration.
And yet, the expression of her eyes was somewhat tender.
This was also a surprise attack, given that Nelly-san occasionally showed very mysterious behaviors and reactions.
– What's wrong?
– Maaya.
Nelly suddenly called her name, Moroha was startled.
– Do you know her?
Even though he asked that, if she was a former Akane student and an acquaintance of the school principal, then it wasn't strange for her to be an acquaintance of Maya. It wasn't a happy thing, but he had heard that Maya had been at Akane Academy for a long time.
– I was the one who gave her nickname, "Maaya".
– Really!?
A great trivia showed up.
– The naming is decent.
That was the most amazing.

Nelly sulked a little and,
– Giving a child a strange name can be the cause of bullying, mental trauma and bad things can happen too. Children’s nicknames should be decided carefully.
Unexpectedly, she took that in consideration earnestly!
Today was the day when he saw Nelly in a more positive light many times.
– So, you’ve realized about it and 「Haimoro」 will be changed?
– ? Your non-calculating cuteness is superb and I can feel satisfied even if I say so myself.
– ……
Just as he saw her in a more positive light, this was the day he was disappointed by her many times.
– Are you on good terms with Maaya?
Nelly pointed to Moroha holding Maya on the mobile screen.
– Yes. We’re roommates.
– Pervert.
– I thought you would say so.
– Lolicon.
– I was prepared for that too.
– Then that’s good too.
– That was unexpected.
– If my boobs were tiny, I could appeal to you as a legal loli… how sad.
– I don’t need it nor do I want it.
Moroha retorted in succession and breathed heavily.
– This child is a strong child. She’s reliable. But she’s really lonely.
Nelly raised and lowered her excitement with complacency.
Even if she suddenly got serious, it was draining to follow her.
– What about a stuffed toy for Maaya?
– That’s an amateurish idea.
Nelly shook her raised finger with a “Tsk Tsk”. Her expression just 「vague」.
– She is your precious roommate. Haimoro has to give her something that matches you two.
– That is so corny…
– But children of her age like that.
Is that so?
Convinced, Moroha bought matching teacups. After all, he drank regularly with Maya in the room.
– Only the school principal remains.
– Alcohol.
– Hey.
– What? Alcohol. Does go with her.
– You’re really not even trying.
Did she bear a grudge against the school principal?
– The other day, I could see Marishiten. She changed too much; I was amazed.

– In what way did she change?
– She became a normie-ish.
– Is that so…
He had never heard anything about having a boyfriend.
– Well, Haimoro doesn’t know the old Marishiten.
– That’s true, but…
Was the old school principal a completely different person from now? Did it mean that now, despite appearances, she looked like a normie and in the past she was an unhappy beautiful girl? He couldn’t imagine that at all.
– For a normie, a gift like that is appropriate. If she gets her hand on it, it better be alcohol with liquor added, no?
– You think you said something clever…?
– Haimoro should think appropriately too. Or is Haimoro honestly aiming for Marishiten too? Do you like older women?
– Where are you going with such idea like that…?
– I’m older too. You can fall in love with me, you know?
– As a friend…
– Haimoro is so cold.
Nelly put her fists on her eyes and shamelessly feigned tears.
Moroha smiled wryly and,
– Then I’ll think I’ll go for alcohol, but… it won’t result in the school principal hating me, right?
– It’s okay. Marishiten does look like she loves to drink.
– I know nothing about brands though.
– That’s not a problem. I would choose the clichéd regular one.
And when he was about to thank her, Moroha suddenly realized.
– How long has Nelly been in that mansion?
– It’s my first time coming out in four years.
– Then you met the school principal for the first time four years ago?
– Yup. Yes.
Moroha fixedly stared at Nelly.
Nelly made a gesture like she was embarrassed by putting her hands on her cheeks while having a □blank□ face, but he ignored her and observed.
– How old are you?
– I’m 20 years old.
– Eh? You were an adult?
– I am an adult.
Nelly put on airs with an “ahem”.
What she was doing didn’t look adult….
– Does that mean that you were in the same class as the school principal?
When subtracting four years from their ages—
– How did you know that the school principal likes to drink?
– … I will remain silent.
– Why is Nelly so familiar with alcohol?
– … I remembered there’s something important I have to do.

Nelly, who turned on her heels, ran away as fast as she could.
Moroha was with eyes half-closed. But. Nelly, who looked over her shoulder once,
– Haimoro is mean.
The way she pouted her small lips was foully cute.
This Onee-san sometimes looked horrifyingly mature, and sometimes looked immature like now, his impression constantly changed, he never got tired of her.
Therefore, he softened his half-closed eyes and changed it to a bitter look that said “it can’t be helped”.

Catching hold of Nelly who ran away, and deciding not to ask boorish questions, he got her to choose a present for the school principal and with that, everyone was ready.
If Moroha were by himself, he probably would have been there until it became dark, and the things he would have chosen would have been less good.
He was honestly grateful.
– I invite you to dinner as thanks.
– A date?
– That’s what I promised.
– There’s a store I want to go after a long time.
He was vigilant, thinking that it was going to be another strange store, but that wasn’t the case.
A restaurant specialized in paellas was located at the corner of the side street in the shopping district in front of the station.
A simple and sturdy appearance that didn’t feel chic at all.
A modest interior with five seats at the counter and two tables for two.
It was still early for dinner, there was only one regular customer (so they looked) at the counter.
Standing in the kitchen was the chef-owner, extremely proud of his work.
Without stopping cooking, he only said 「Welcome」 in a quiet and low voice.
Even when seeing Nelly, he didn’t move at all. An artisan.
Moroha and Nelly made use of the table seats.
– We’re lucky. It was empty.
– The atmosphere is very good. Did you spend your time here a lot in the past?
– Yes. That’s right.
Nelly said, looking nostalgic.

This was something she was doing for the first time in four years. Moroha, too, missed sometimes the Chinese-style fried rice set of the local ramen shop. The food his parents prepared and that he tasted for the last time eight years ago was more—no, recalling that now was good.
The order was entrusted to Nelly, and Moroha waited for the food.
Nelly took notice of the store interior around her, reflecting upon her nostalgic feelings.
Moroha kept silent and tried not to disturb her,
– I'm glad to be able to come to this restaurant with Haimoro.
Nelly suddenly began to say such a thing.
Moroha held a simple question.
– Why are you so delighted with me?
Moroha appeared when she was looking for the warmth of a person after being secluded for four years—he got that.
But coming all the way here to see him, he was honestly surprised.
– Because Haimoro is a good man.
– You sure are straightforward, huh….
Moroha could only hide his head.
– But you don't think that I'm that grandiose, do you? I'm still a kid.
– I believe in my ability to judge character. At a glance, I immediately knew the answer.
The powers of persuasion she had after he was shown her special skill that straightforwardly hit the nail by just looking at the photos a short while ago.
– What are you living for, Haimoro?
– Well… I've never thought of such a philosophical thing.
– The people in the past said a lot of difficult things. But I think. There's only one meaning for a woman to live.
The answer, which many historical philosophers had explored and hadn't reached the truth yet,
– That is to be embraced by a strong and cool man—nothing else.
Nelly said so unreservedly.
Moroha was speechless for a moment.
– By the way, there's another meaning for a man to live. To embrace kind and beautiful women, all of them.
– Even taking a philosophic view has a limit…
– But it's the truth.
Nelly's facial expression remained vague, but her view didn't yield.
The answer wasn't as great as he expected. *Well*, Moroha thought, *this kind of thing is different for each person after all.* And didn't feel like trying to oppose her or anything.
However, he tried to say something mean.
– What will Nelly do if she gets to know a lot of good guys?
– I'd like to be embraced by all of them.
– I give up.
Moroha raised his voice unconsciously,

– But that is my real intention.
She showed a devilish facial expression only for a mere instant and smiled weakly.
– … Nelly is honest, isn’t she?
For the people. For herself. For her desires. That straightforward part of her was gratifying, and although it was a relatively preposterous thought, Moroha didn’t dislike it. The food was brought in.
A special seafood paella with tomato sauce that filled a shallow pot fully. The appetite-inducing, warm, red-dyed rice shone glossily with the saffron. The seafood piled high on top was also magnificent. It was as if Japanese littleneck clams and mussels opened their mouths, appealing them to eat and eat.
Nelly said 「Cooking a lot of paella at once is tastier」, so she intentionally ordered one type of paella in a large iron pot. To share it with the one she got along with and eat it.
Moroha scooped up and carried it to his mouth, then involuntarily nodded with a 「Yup」. He hummed.
The refreshing scent of the saffron was the first thing to run through his nasal cavity.
The rice cooked from the beginning had a little of hard core remaining, which created an exquisite texture that was neither too soft nor too hard. A proper texture was important. The quality encouraged him to have a bite, then another, he couldn’t stop.
Of course, the taste was good. The good flavor of the soup coming out of the seafood and the sweet and sour taste of the tomatoes mixed together, the rice absorbing that mixture amply. The more he chewed and masticated, the more the deliciousness oozed in his mouth. Thanks to the chewiness, that happy time lasted forever.
The parts of the crispy rice at the bottom of the cooking pot was tasty again, he ate it by scraping it off. No grain of rice would be left behind.
And the taste of the seafood delivered the coup de grace. The shrimp was steamy hot and lightly salted, the Japanese littleneck clams and mussels were overflowing with flavor, the slight bitterness refreshed his mouth.
– It’s very difficult to cook with rice and not overcook the seafood.
Nelly explained how great the amazing ability of the chef of this restaurant was.
Moroha nodded “yes” many times instead of replying, his mouth filled with rice.
They ate everything, talked about trivial matters and left the restaurant when it was pitch dark.
Looking at the clock, he confirmed that it wasn’t time to go home in a rush yet.
Now, where do we start walki—Nelly didn’t follow him.
He looked back; she was standing in front of the restaurant.
It shouldn’t be that far, but it felt strangely far.

– What’s wrong?
– I walked around this city for the first time in four years, I’ve missed everything. So much.
Instead of answering, Nelly began to say all of a sudden.
– Thank you for walking with me.
And.
Moroha scratched his head, hiding his embarrassment,
– Because I was here and got in your way, you weren’t able to enjoy that nostalgia satisfactorily, were you?
– That’s not it. When I walked alone, I was crying because the nostalgia and the feeling of loneliness clung to me.
– Is that so?
He had a feeling that he understood her, and also felt like he was concerned as if understanding her.
– Where are we going next? My errand is done and I accompanied Nelly to her favorite place thoroughly, right?
– I have run out of time.
Moroha invited her, but Nelly shook her head to the left and right.
– The nowadays Cinderella dressed as Santa, huh.
Feeling a bit disappointed, Moroha cracked a joke and Nelly’s cheeks softened ever so slightly.
– If so. Take this. Will you catch it?
He took out a small box and gently threw it to Nelly.
Nelly caught it safely.
– What is this?
– It’s a little early, but it’s a Christmas present.
– For me?
– If it wasn’t for you, would I give it to you?
– When?
– Stealthily while Nelly carefully selected the items.
– Can I open it?
– You can. I don’t understand a woman’s heart, so if it is disappointing, will you do it secretly later?
– I cannot guarantee.
Saying a frightening thing, Nelly opened the small box excitedly.
There was a cute rabbit keychain inside.
– … Like I thought, you really are a good man.
But it was no match for Nelly who smiled like a flower blooming.
– Thank you.
Nelly put it away, into the cleavage like it was something important. Hey.
Moroha didn’t even have time for retorting, her facial expression returned to her usual vague face,
– Shiba Akira.
She came up with something sudden again.
– Shiba… what?

– The name of the Demon that Haimoro met at the mansion of the witch. His name is Shiba Akira.
Moroha was taken aback.
Nelly was trying to fulfill the promise.
– Shiba Akira, huh…
– If you mention this name and ask Marishiten, you will understand a lot of stuff.
– Ask to the school principal?
– Well then. **See you later**.
– Ah, hey.
Moroha stretched his hand to try stopping her, but Nelly lightly and repeatedly jumped back and disappeared into the shadow of the alley.
If he ran, he might catch up with her.
But Nelly wouldn’t want that.
Thinking so, he didn’t feel like chasing her.
However, it would be a lie to say that he wasn’t dissatisfied.
(Even without being that cautious, I wish you would have let me say a bit more decent goodbye…)
The resentment that he appeared to be an insensitive man like that.
Moroha shrugged his shoulders, and at the same time, looked up at the night sky.
The moon was appearing. It was a full moon.
The illumination of the city and the hustle and bustle of pre-Christmas stood still solitarily in a place far away in the distance.
Moroha suddenly remembered.
The fairy tale of the rabbits that lived there.

Chapter 3: The man called Isurugi Gen

On his way back after seeing Nelly go away.
When he was walking on the back street of the shopping district in front of the station, he found an unexpected person.
Isurugi Jin.
Even at a time like this, he held his head high, roaming the streets imposingly, turning his head to the left and right slowly, looking like he was searching for something.
– Good evening, Senpai.
Moroha ran up to him. He was a person to whom Moroha was grateful on a daily basis, so he wondered if he could be of any help.
However,
– Oh, it's you, Haimura-kun. What a coincidence…
Isurugi's reply was inarticulate, he seemed to be embarrassed to be found.
Oops, he scratched his head on his mind.
– Ah, I just happened to see you and greet you. Well then.
He tried to move quickly, but,
– No, my bad. Haimura-kun. It's not like it's annoying to be seen.
He was immediately stopped.
– I still have no experience showing it on my face.
Isurugi frowned.
– I was looking for Gen—my younger brother.
– Oh.
Moroha came to understand. Isurugi was talking about him with Tanaka the other day.
– Could it be that you've been doing that every day since then?
– I have to find the time for it, even if a little.
– Senpai does devote to his family, doesn't he?
Taking his hat off to him, Moroha praised him.
However—Isurugi frowned more and more.
– You are misunderstanding.
He said in a voice devoid of warmth, then sighed and turned on his heel.
He invited him to talk while walking.
Moroha accepted and walked beside him.

Isurugi said in a terrible cold voice as he searched for his younger brother, looking everywhere with a sharp gaze.
– I'm not doing this out of consideration for my younger brother. I will find Gen and this time for sure I will make him give up on becoming a Savior.
Moroha was startled at the unexpected words he said.
– Make him give up…?
– There is a school that receives Akane Academy students who gave up on becoming Saviors for various reasons.
– Is it because he hit Tanaka-sensei?
Isurugi assented gravely.
– The other day, Gen punched my father. He was told a reasonable thing, to go to school, and with just that…
– …
Moroha refrained from commenting.
It was cowardly for Saviors to harm ordinary people.
And it was more cowardly than an adult hitting a child.
In front of his blood relatives, he was afraid of what they would express straightforwardly.
– When I tried scolding him for that, Gen swore he would never do it again. Despite that, he hit his teacher. Does he think that it shouldn't be counted because Tanaka-sensei is a Savior?
– … I think that's a far-fetched argument.
The substance of the problem was the determination of Gen who used force right away. And he showed no improvements.
– We are too powerful…
Moroha stared at his palm and said.
Anyone who didn't feel responsible for it would be like an unsafety weapon.
In fact, if Gen hadn't hit Tanaka or his father, but a truly unrelated ordinary person, the Internal Audit Office of the Japanese Division should have punished Gen who set out to do something.
A Savior like him must control himself. By nature.
– Thanks to the kindness of the school principal, I was told to teach the basic Light Techniques to Gen. In only two years, he became docile. If a problem occurred, then the teachings would stop right there, so he must have put up with it all the time. I vaguely noticed that, but I couldn't say What's with you now? to the guy who was actually being serious. All I could do was teach him the basics as well as the righteousness and knowledge of the Saviors. Nonetheless, not everything reached him. As soon as he entered the academy, he lost all restraint and caused trouble for you and Ranjou-kun.
– That's all in the past.
Moroha replied immediately.
Isurugi talked about the time when Gen had an exhibition match with Satsuki and bullied her.

If Satsuki were still bringing up that matter, Moroha would have never forgive him.
But Satsuki completely forgot it.
So Moroha **didn’t care** anymore.
– Can you complain a little, Haimura-kun?
– That is unusual, you know?
– From my perspective, only one person can complain and that is you.
Isurugi showed a dry smile on his face.
He could only reply *by all means*.
After Isurugi thanked him, he began to speak in a rusty voice.
– Gen has had the habit of immediately using force from way before, especially bullying the weak, that’s what he likes the most. Every time he does something wrong, he doesn’t listen, not even to our parents giving him advice. He is afraid of me, so when I say something, he pretends to listen to me quietly. It has been like this all the time. I really don’t know what to do with him.
A story he pictured only by learning of it.
And just imagining it made him sick.
– I consulted with the school teachers and counselors many times. But everyone said the same to me. 「You have to confront the issue with patience and be careful each time」, they said. The result of following that is what you see. They also said 「Someday your feelings will reach him」. Oddly enough, there’s no sign of that yet. They warned me, saying 「Don’t give up. Doing that is like forsaking him」. My parents are also giving their all. But I’m too exhausted. I’m cruel, aren’t I?
Isurugi mocked himself.
– Has Haimura-kun ever bullied the weak or used irrational force against someone?
Moroha, who was asked that, shook his head, it was unnecessary to think about it.
– Me neither. I don’t want to do such embarrassing acts. That’s why I can’t understand Gen. I can’t understand why he keeps doing such embarrassing acts, even if I warn him; I can’t understand why he doesn’t try to stop.
Moroha couldn’t sympathize with him at all, but the truth was that people like him were in every school.
Gen wasn’t special.
– I don’t understand my younger brother. Maybe I’m missing something as a person. Even if I’m told I’m a failure as an older brother, I can’t talk back.
Moroha didn’t think he was a failure. But, when he saw the frowning face of Isurugi tormented by feelings of guilt, he couldn’t say that imprudently.
– Both the school principal and Tanaka-sensei were kind to Gen. However, since he just keeps making problems, even the two gentle people will feel responsible, don’t you agree? And for me, that’s painful.
Isurugi raised his dropped face.
His gaze looked scary, as if it were piercing Gen who wasn’t there.

He stiffened his sunken cheeks even more.
– I, his older brother, who did a bad job, have to give Gen the final word—that is the least I must do.
He resolutely asserted as if declaring again.
His face seen from the side made a lasting impression on Moroha.
Speechless, and without asking anything else, they parted ways.
He felt like wanting to help him and search for him together.
But—
He got that even if he did so, Isurugi would only be driven by more feelings of guilt.

Satsuki and Shizuno were walking down the streets at night illuminated by the street lights.
They went to the shopping district in the northern part of the city to buy Christmas gifts for Moroha.
“Neither this nor that will do”, they clamored, and although they took a break and had dinner at a shop specializing in galettes recommended on the internet, it got this late by the time both of them could finally find gifts they were satisfied with.
– Urushibara is so indecisive, it’s unforgivable. It’s way too dark. Ah□□ I’m tired□□□.
– Your second choice is still a miss. And is Satsuki, who hesitated for many hours, in any position to say that?
And so, they had a noisy conversation until they went back home.
– “Is still a miss”? What!? You don’t know how wonderful the gift I chose is!
– I’m sure it’s non-burnable garbage that even Moroha won’t understand.
– Don’t call it non-burnable garbage! I hope that you, as soon as you have given him the gift, make a complicated face to Moroha and are sentenced to□I was told “to be glad” with a fake smile□.
– Right… Then you better be prepared too… you will be sentenced to □I was told that “you want Shizuno” with a fake smile□…
– Sentences like that don’t exist! Also, Nii-sama isn’t an empty playboy.
– It. Is. A. Joke. I’m sure Moroha will say it earnestly.
– There’s no way he’ll say i————t!
– I wonder about that? As soon as he sees my wonderful present, he will become a beast.
– Is that an aphrodisiac!? Anyhow, I’m confident that my present will make Moroha happy! Foo□□□ fofofofofo.
– Ara? Is this a match? About who will make Moroha happier?
– Yes□, let’s do it! It’s either victory or defeat!

– And the pitiful Satsuki-chan will be rejected by Moroha, buried alone in the snow while the light of the match──
– Am I “The Ltitle Match Girl”!?
– But Satsuki is someone who doesn’t learn her lesson. You’ve been defeated by me many times, when will you be satisfied?
– When did I lose to yooooouuuuuu!?
Satsuki kept yelling without noticing that Shizuno was showing a small dimple on her cheek.
The night park used as a shortcut.
There were no lights or people in the spacious and completely silent garden.
A heavy darkness and silence swallowed the noisy voices of the girls.
– Are you really a woman…?
How could Shizuno always have a comeback with words?──
The moment Satsuki was reflecting on it with her mouth in a □ shape.
– Hey. I was waiting for you.
Suddenly, and from the front, they heard the rough voice of a man.
Surprised, Satsuki stopped walking.
Shizuno glared at him sternly.
Satsuki also strained her eyes and saw something crouching in the depths of the darkness.
And he stood up slowly.
A vaguely human-shaped silhouette emerged.
A big body with a height of over 180 centimeters.
– You’re still a noisy woman, Ranjou.
They heard the voice of the man again.
They felt like they had heard it somewhere, but they couldn’t remember.
The sign of him approaching with loud footsteps.
Satsuki was cautious of it and took several steps forward to protect Shizuno.
Closing the distance to each other, they came to see each other’s face in the moonlight. He was Isurugi Gen.
He was showing a dangerous smile on his face, like a carnivorous animal that had cornered its prey.
Seeing him, Satsuki stopped being on guard.
– Huh? Don’t frighten me. It’s been a long time, has it not? I heard that you’re refusing to go to school, but if you’re roaming and looking energetic like this, then why don’t you go to school?
She started talking as though she had nothing at all do to with what was going on.
Gen opened his mouth, he was dumbfounded.
Since he thought about doing so for a while, that was more than enough to distort his look,
– Are you making fun of me…?
He threatened her in a threatening voice.
– I’m not making fun of you, that’s cheap.

“Stop joking”, Satsuki said, laughing foolishly.
Countless veins appeared on the forehead of Gen.
– It doesn’t look like you understand the situation…
He made his squared shoulders tremble, subdued his voice and threatened her even more.
Shizuno said in an extremely cold tone of voice,
– Then can you tell us? It’s not like ambushing girls in the streets at night is something to be praised about, is it?
– Kukukukuku… alright, I’ll tell *ya*…
Gen laughed sadistically.
– I want to take revenge on that bastard Moroha… and soon…
He answered eerily.
His way of talking and laughing was theatrical, his ulterior motive, which was “by doing this, I’ll scare you”, was obvious.
Satsuki and Shizuno looked at each other’s face and both shrugged their shoulders,
– Aha, what you say is too serious to be a joke. And how are you going to “take revenge on Moroha”?
– Or are you going to hurt us and try to cause mental pain to Moroha? The thinking of a low-life.
Satsuki laughed mockingly and Shizuno criticized him heartlessly.
Sharply criticized by the two women,
– ……
Gen’s look changed.
He kept silent, losing his temper.
Making his blood go up to his head to the point it was obvious even in the dark, like a volcano on the verge of eruption.
– … I’ve had enough… I’m done talking…
The savage dog barked gloomily as if howling.
– … Look in silence… and tremble violently… in front of my true strength…
Prana rose up from his whole body.
An ominous brilliance similar to the dark and red blood.
– If I bear a grudge against you, then blame Haimura, you shitty amateeeeeur!
And Gen’s anger erupted.
Using 【Godlike Movement】, he attacked at random.
A crude charge with all his strength that left everything up to the speed on the ground and that gave a damn about ingenuity or skill.
His arrogance looked down on the opponent, on the powerless girls.
When Satsuki also wore golden *prana* on her body,
– No, it’s your fault.
She gave him a finger flick to the forehead.
It was too easy to hit him first because Gen had both arms stretched like an idiot.

If compared to people who studied nasty techniques day and night and who tried to catch up with her by any means and the incarnations of speed like Haruka, who she usually sparred with, then something like this was more akin to dealing with infants.
When Gen was blown back like a comedy star, he bounced like a ball on the ground, tumbling down and somersaulting each time, crashing from the head, shoulder and bottom, and finally, he dragged the climbing frame into his tumbling and stopped at last.
– I don’t get what you mean. What kind of reason do you have to resent Moroha?
Satsuki pressed a question, but Isurugi was foaming at his mouth and convulsing.
She really went easy on him. Even his toughness was depressing.
– Let’s ignore him, Satsuki.
– Y-yeah…
Prompted by Shizuno, Satsuki tried to pass by.
What was all this? She wondered, without being satisfied.
– Wa… wait!
Then Gen recovered.
As he finally stood up, relying on the squashed climbing frame,
– Ranjou… what’s your damn rank now?
– I’m just B, why?
Satsuki replied without hesitation.
It wasn’t something to brag about, but enough to be irritated because she hadn’t been able to catch up with Moroha at all.
– You liar!
Gen immediately opened his eyes wide in anger and yelled hysterically.
– I had a hard time getting to C-Rank, so I can’t believe a small fry like you is a B-Rank! If you’re lying, get better at it!
– But it’s the truth.
Satsuki smoothly pointed to her name tag.
Gen didn’t understand the meaning of □1 – 1 White B□ written there.
This was enough for him to open his eyes and gaze at it in wonderment.
Despite finally getting up, he leaned on the climbing frame and slipped, falling on his backside.
– You’re lying… you’re lying… you’re lying…

-3

Looking like he was spacing out, he repeated the same words as if talking in delirium.
– Shall we go, Satsuki?
– O, okay…
Prompted by Shizuno again, Satsuki left the place this time.
She went out of the park and when looking over her shoulder, the figure of Gen couldn’t be seen, it was dark.
Only darkness hovered in the background.
And yet, she left the place in haste and shuddering, hearing the voice of Gen repeating 「You’re lying」 many times.

Gen was at a loss.
Unless he defeated Haimura Moroha, he wouldn’t return ashamed to Akane Academy.
And winning wasn’t enough.
It had to be a thorough revenge that made him taste all the pent-up resentment he felt but doubled.
For that reason, he thought of attacking his 「younger sister」.
The result: a miserable spectacle in which he was beaten up by someone Moroha considered as a younger sister, he challenged her to a fight and got defeated.
When they entered to school, she was a small fry who couldn’t even open two gates.
Why and when did that gap develop that much…?
Now going to school was even less possible.
But he didn’t want to change schools. He didn’t want to miss the wealth and fame of 「Saviors」 before his own eyes.
What he used to support himself was only the rusty climbing frame.
– What… should I do…?
Gen held his head and crouched.
– Do you want power… boy?
Suddenly, someone whispered in his ear.
A calm voice that felt like it passed through his eardrum and completely pierced the bottom of his soul.
Gen raised his face as if jumping.
Before he knew, a man was standing beside him.
A calm young man with thin-framed glasses.
However, he didn’t feel fragile.
Rather, he felt composed and dignified.

A king-like personality accompanied by all the darkness behind him.
He was allowed to fixedly stare at a monster in person*.
*TN: Monster is the furigana reading for “out of common sense”.
– Now, will you let me hear… your reply?
The man smiled faintly.
Just like the Devil.

Chapter 4: Christmas Party

□□Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way ♪□□
In the gorgeous 3LDK apartment where Shimon Mari lived.
Moroha's and Maya's singing voices resounded.
□□Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one-horse open sleigh, hey ♪□□
They decorated the room as they sang happily.
They folded origami paper and connected them to make ribbons.
– Moroha, I'd like you to open a new glue desu.
– Okaay.
They were making lots of them.
– Maaya, I'm thirstyy.
– I'll go get tea desu.
They made them as they took breaks moderately.
For some reason Mari, who came back from shopping, stood stock still at the entrance of the room,
– You two are more intimate than I thought.
For some reason they muttered, looking astonished.
□□?□□
Moroha was eating the cake and tea served by Maya while folding origami paper. They stared at her in puzzlement.
– … Is it always like this in the dormitories?
– I'm not really sure about what kind of impression "like this" is.
– Maaya and the others are as special as always nanodesu.
– … I see. Haimura-kun, I'm not saying it has to be now, but please take responsibility for Maya someday.
– What? What kind of responsibility?
– … Nothing.
For some reason, Mari dropped her shoulders and began to mutter to herself something like □*Sigh*... When will my fantastic boyfriend appear…?□ while opening the shopping bags.
Moroha turned his face to the one next to him,
– Hey, what is she talking about?
– It's nothing (Happy face).
Even Maya said something like that.
But when he saw her angelic innocent face, he didn't feel like questioning her.

The two of them sang cheerfully again and returned to the decoration work.
The day of Christmas Eve. 14:00.
The weather forecast said it would be sunny all day. Great job, sun.
The party was scheduled to start at 16:00, but at the strong request of Maya, who said 「We won't be ready even if we want to start now desu」, they motivated themselves and now were getting ready for it.
Because Moroha was taught to decorate the shop ran by his parents when he was young, he got used to it. He was confident that he could decorate even a huge Japanese fir, but he gave up because of Mari's entreaty, who said 「T-that would be too big, so forgive me…」
Therefore, a toy Japanese fir was enshrined on the TV stand.
– Isn't it nice that 6 people will be here? Though it's regrettable that Momochi-san can't come.
Mari confirmed while organizing the contents of the shopping bags.
– A friend in her class seems to have a birthday today.
Moroha replied as he folded origami paper.
Precisely because yesterday was a national holiday, he heard that she went to visit her friend far away and stayed over.
– Oh, that's something special. Then she surely had to give priority to that.
– To make up for it, we decided to go out and eat together tomorrow.
Moroha said, satisfied with the finishing touches of the connected ribbons.
「」……「」
Then all of a sudden, Maya and Mari became silent.
– What's wrong?
He asked, but he was ignored, and the two of them looked at each other's face,
– Haruka-onee-san is getting bolder little by little, Maaya is filled with deep emotion nanodesu.
– It's okay to be impressed, but it's not good for a woman to accept it meekly, okay? Do your best too, alright?
Another discussion that Moroha couldn't understand.
Although they were still distant relatives, they lived together for many years. This was what "tacit understanding" meant.
While looking at them with a pleasant feeling,
– Oh no. I forgot to buy crackers.
Mari put a hand on her cheek with a troubled face.
– I'll go buy them right away.
– Maaya will go desu. I want Mary-onee-chan to rest desu.
Maya stood up immediately, checked the purse in her pouch and rushed out.
– Fufu, she is very excited, isn't she?
Seeing her off, Mari muttered happily.
– It's Maaya's first time after all. Let's have a fun party.
Moroha said as he decorated the place high up the window with the ribbons.

—But.
– Before that, do you have a minute?
He turned around slowly.
A full audiovisual equipment, open kitchen and wide dining room with good sunlight.
It was just him and Mari there. It was the perfect time to ask her.
– Yes? Is it a difficult conversation, I wonder?
Mari, who leaned coquettishly on the corner sofa, seemed to very interested.
– Well. I can't tell if it is or not.
Moroha sat cross-legged on the carpet.
And asked straightforwardly.
– Do you know a person named—Shiba Akira?
– Shiba Akira you say!?
At that moment, Mari suddenly slipped down the sofa. Was it that shocking?
– Don't surprise me like that, geez! Where did you hear that name?
Mari dragged the dropped pointy hat towards herself as she got up.
– I heard this from a person called Nelly… no, Shiroi Usako.
– You know Shiroi-san too!? When!? Where!?
Mari bent herself forward to the table with a momentum that threw off the pointy hat she finally had put on her head.
Confused by the unexpected and violent reaction, Moroha blinked.
– Err, we just got to know each other the other day…
– Please let me hear about it in detail!
The questioner ended up becoming the opposite.
Moroha made an effort to exchange information and calm down Mari as he scratched his head.
It seemed to be written as □□□ (Shiba Akira) *.
*TN: When Moroha said his name before, it was written in hiragana (□□□□□).
A first-generation student of Akane Academy, just like Mari. A regular member of the first generation of *Strikers*.
– Properly speaking, he was worthy of being the captain, not me…. But at that time, I was arrogant even if I do say so myself, I never gave up. Shiroi-san often made fun of me.
This meant that Nelly was also a regular member back then.
– Shiba-kun is like you, a person who doesn't boast his strength at all, even when the seat of the deputy head was assigned to another person.
– I can't imagine that the school principal had something like an arrogant phase.
– Every person has their own history.
Mari showed a smile of self-deprecation on her face.
Moroha pretended not to notice it and cheerfully laughed it off with an □Of course□. Then,
– So that guy… was really strong, huh…

He muttered as he recalled the personality and the certain importance of the way of talking of the man he met at the mansion of the witch.
– Shiba-kun is a rare 「Savior」 who awakened with his own strength.
When he was in third year of middle school, his hometown was unexpectedly attacked by a 「Metaphysical」 and he awakened to protect his family with his power.
Because of that, he already had battle experience, so he came along to Akane Academy with a flourish of trumpets.
Naturally selected by *Strikers*, he stood out remarkably.
– At that time, the White Knight Organization had just been established, it was a terrible time…. There were less C-Ranks than there are now, the people who could stand on the battlefield were insufficient, the standard practice development was incomplete and it wasn't unusual for people to die if they fought. My team was no exception.
Mari hung her head, her eyes dark.
– Still, the one who kept injuries to a minimum was Shiba-kun because he was always bearing the brunt of the attacks. It is not an exaggeration to say that I'm alive now because of him. But the principal at that time was an extremely cruel man. The more we gained in battle, the more he sent us to even difficult battlefields for scoring his own Brownie points.
Mari and Nelly were wounded and worn out.
Shiba was in the vanguard, exhausted, but still throwing out his chest.
Moroha was struck by painful feelings just by imaging that.
– And at one point, a disaster occurred in which 「Metaphysicals」 appeared in succession, we still weren't able to recover from the injuries and Shiba-kun went to the battlefield alone… and yet, he did it, and was acknowledged as an S-Rank. I don't know how gruesome the battle was, the people around me clapped, they were in ecstasy.
A worshipped image.
Honor that was nothing but a complete inconvenience.
He couldn't help but feel bitter.
While being convinced of "In the end, that man was the sixth S-Rank, huh".
– That continued for over a year. In the fall of the second year, one day, Shiba-kun couldn't fight.
– Was he injured or something? … On an emotional level, perhaps?
– Emotional problems…. He looked like he had lost the willpower to live. But not even I know what happened. At that time, I was trying to open my heart to others little by little, but it didn't work, and I didn't understand why Shiba-kun ended up doing so. In the first place, I finally realized that not even Shiba-kun knew the reason we were fighting for… I feel sorry for him…
Mari looked up in a different direction with a melancholic look.
To not let the tears gathered in the outer corner of her eyes fall.
– The brute adults were making Shiba-kun, who lost the willpower to fight, to keep fighting by every means…. It seems that he got to witness the ugly

part of humans, I remember well how intensely disgusting it was…. Surely that must have been unbearable for him. … one day, he abruptly disappeared with Shiroi-san. Shiroi-san had been his greatest supporter since he entered school*.
*TN: Adults is the furigana reading for “principals”.
Moroha felt that in the mansion too.
A deep relationship between Shiba and Nelly that couldn’t be measured by others.
Was that cultivated at Akane Academy?
Compared to it, what was different from the impression he had was—
– Based on Nelly’s way of speaking, I thought she was on good terms with the school principal…
– Shiba-kun and Shiroi-san possibly thought of me as their comrade in arms. If only I had recognized them as friends sooner…
Mari distorted her beautiful face and grinded her teeth.
(I see…)
Moroha understood as he stared in the direction of Akane Academy outside the window.
The current Akane had an educational policy that protected students and respected individuals*.
*TN: Current is the furigana reading for “Mari”.
Instead of mass-producing human weapons that slaughtered 『Metaphysicals』, it trained 『Saviors』 who had their own righteousness and beliefs.
It never made light of the curriculum of a regular school or the humane heart and emotions.
Everything expressed the regrets of that time.
It couldn’t be done so easily.
It was easy to imagine how difficult it would have been to steal the position of the former principal, expulse the old influence and built a genuine opposite system.
Moroha returned his gazed and looked at Mari with a gaze of respect.
At the same time, he asked the following question.
– On that note, are the two of them missing?
– No… it’s a little different…
Mari turned her head to the left and right feebly.
– After that, the moment I heard his name, I didn’t believe my ears—
Winter, four years ago.
Shiba Akira rose in revolt.
He rallied 『Saviors』 who weren’t pleased with the White Knight Organization and declared war to the Six Heads.
The 『Saviors』 who didn’t obey the organization were no longer 『Saviors』.
Sir Edward preached so and decided to call them 『Demons』.
Shiba became the king of the 『Demons』 and they became a threat alongside the 『Metaphysicals』.

However—no, for this reason, perhaps?
Shiba's rebellion was quickly suppressed.
The Chinese Division Head Ba Tekka decided to act and defeated Shiba, the mastermind, in person.
The 『Demons』, who had lost their unifying force, soon collapsed due to the small number they had from the start.
An incredibly fast blitzkrieg tactic. The seriousness of the Six Heads.
Most of the people from the White Knight Organization didn't know about this rebellion, even to this day.
It was no more than a coincidence that Mari knew. She happened to hear that the former principal proudly kept cursing and denunciating the dead Shiba.
– Eh? Did you hear that Shiba was dead?
– Together with Shiroi-san. But they were alive.
– And in the mansion of the "witch of the prison"… huh.
Mari made a complicated facial expression.
There was no doubt that the delight that they were alive was mixed in with those mixed emotions.
– Why did the information differ? Rather, who is lying?
It was unlikely that the former principal had such ability or motive.
– During the joint operation this time, Shiroi-san came to visit me. She said that Head Suruga Andou is a liar.
– Is that so…? Then the Japanese Division Head is a liar?
– Maybe it's not just Division Head Suruga. After all, the mansion of "the witch of the prison" was made by the French 『Les Éléments』, no?
– This sounds like a conspiracy of some of the Six Heads, or all of them. Why making lies like that…?
– Well…. Maybe they have certain profound thoughts, or surprisingly, no big reason at all…
– Shall we ask them directly?
– Eh…?
Moroha said, looking as if this had nothing to do with him.
He gave a sidelong glance at Mari getting bewildered and made a phone call with his mobile phone.
『Hello? It's me, me』
『Munya… this voice… is it you, Jack!?』
He heard a sleeping-sounding voice then, in a complete change, a surprised voice from the telephone receiver.
『Hey, why are you sleeping during the day? The director-general sure has a do-nothing job, huh』
『It's 6 in the morning in London, you know?』
『Oh, I see. My bad』
Moroha apologized shallowly.
『Geeez, stop messing around Jack』』

The person with whom he was talking on the phone—Edward, the head of the British Division, would forgive him right away.
And greet him too.
「There's something I'd like to ask, but do you remember the name "Shiba Akira"?」
「How Jack knows that name!?」
「I'm the one asking questions. Do you know where he is now?」
「I'd like to know that! When Charles' subordinates went to see the state of the mansion of "the witch of the prison", it was completely empty. Maybe with the confusion of the attack of the headless Evil Spirit class」
「Well, what kind of too-good-to-be-true-story is that…? Then my first question is: are you aware of the situation in which Shiba, who was imprisoned, appears to be dead to the world?」
「That's because we can't let the mastermind of the rebellion live」
「Then why is the opposite? Why didn't you kill him? No, I'm not in the mood to blame you at all, I think it was an excellent decision」
It was a bother, so holding back without future troubles—however, that wasn't the thinking of really strong people after all.
「Of course, I proposed sparing his life and persuaded everyone」*
*TN: Everyone is the furigana reading for Six Heads.
Edward puffed up with pride, probably because he was proud Moroha said "excellent decision".
「Akira is like us, you know? However, Charles and Lighting Empress are always talking, they're so annoying. Do you know how many hardships did I have at that ―」
「Ah, that's enough. Thank you, bye bye」
Moroha ended the phone call.
He got a returning phone call right away, so he turned off the mobile phone.
He was busy now.
Later, he would get a call from AJ to scold him with a terrible threatening attitude, but that was another story.
– Alright. The thought of not wanting to take his life—was a very respectable reason.
He told Mari with a face as if this had nothing to do with him.
Mari seemed to be utterly amazed for a moment,
-You are really… an unprecedented person.
She finally wiped the outer corner of her eyes and laughed.
After all, a beautiful woman was always better than being sunk in the dark.
Fortunately, the sound of the front door opening was heard and Maya came running while making sounds of footsteps.
– I'm home nanodeeesu.
And, seeing Mari laughing,
– Were you talking about something interesting nanodesu? Maaya would like you to let her hear it too desu.
They went to greet such an innocent angel-chan.

– It’s cold outside, isn’t it? I will make tea now.
– I shall offer the well-behaved Maaya-chan to warm by sitting on my lap.
Mari headed to the kitchen and Moroha hugged Maya. He let her sit on his lap and hugged her tightly.
Then the three of them had a friendly conversation for a while, after that, they remembered that the decoration work had been interrupted and resumed it hurriedly.
If he put the things he had heard now and the story he heard from Shizuno the other day—
Then what resulted was that the remnants of the 『Demons』 who controlled the 『Metaphysicals』 and Shiba Akira were related.
It was easy to imagine that they probably came together now that he broke free from the mansion.
But the matter in question was kept in Moroha’s chest for now.
When he looked at Maya’s smiling face, he didn’t feel like the conversation should be continued today, on Christmas Eve.

Satsuki and Shizuno came together before four o’clock.
– Happyyyyyyy, Merry Christmaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaas!
His『younger sister』 looked strange from the first words she said.
– Satsuki-onee-san, happy and merry mean the same nanodesu.
– Uwaaaaaa that’s *terriiiific*! The room is decorated. *Terriiiiific!* There are so many ribbons. *Terriiiiific!* There’s even a Japanese fir tree. *Terriiiiific! Cha cha! Terriiiiific!* So cute! *Terriiiiific!*
– I think your excitement is terrific…
And she didn’t hear Maya’s retort at all.
As soon as she entered the apartment of the school principal, the surroundings surprised Satsuki who kept raising a strange voice and made her eyes shine and wander here and there aimlessly.
On the other hand, Shizuno was calm as one would expect and handed Mari a long and thin vanity case.
– Thank you for inviting me today, Sensei. Here, I came with refreshments Nii-sama entrusted me with.
– Oh, is it wine? Thank—
– Me too, me too, me too, I brought lots of thiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiings.
Satsuki stepped in between them from the side, put the Santa bag she was carrying on her back on the ground and opened it.
– DX reincarnation game, UNYO, card games, Hanafuda, TCG, Othello, Shogi, Go, chess—
– What the, you really want to play, huh.

Today was Sunday. Tomorrow would be Monday. Staying up late was strictly prohibited.
– Apart from that, what about Leshya? I was sure she would come with you.
– Eh? I met her in the dorm during the day, but I haven't heard anything.
– She seems to have something to do so she will be late. She wants us to start first.
When Shizuno replied, Satsuki inflated her cheeks and glared at her. As if to say *"you're nothing but cunning".*
Moroha showed a wry smile on his face as a delicate relationship between these three people appeared.
– Then do we start desu? Shall we party nanodesu?
– Shall we do so? But we have to eat the food first…
Mari glanced repeatedly at the kitchen.
– If so, we can only play gaaaaaaa──!
Satsuki thrust her hand into the Santa bag she paid on her own again.
She found something there, and as if she had remembered something,
– ──Be.fo.re.that. Look, look, Maaya. Ta-da!
She took out a Christmas present from the bag.
– It's a Christmas present from me!
– It's a gift from Ranjou-san, Elena-san and me.
Shizuno corrected together with a cough.
The three gave her a pouch with a very cute design.
-The one you use all the time is cute too, but you've been with it for a long time, right?
As expected of Satsuki, she noticed it well.
This kind of thing was hard for Moroha, a man, to notice.
– Thank you nanodesu! I'm happy desu.
Maya was also very delighted, and immediately put it on.
And transferred the crystal in the pouch she had from before.
Then rotated as if boasting it.
The new pouch moved in a lively way with the centrifugal force.
It looked very good on her, everyone applauded.
Maya was shy for a moment,
– Maaya and Mari-onee-chan also have presents for the Onee-sans desu.
The items handed by Mari were distributed to Satsuki and Shizuno.
– You too, Moroha. Here nanodesu.
– Thank you.
It was good that──Moroha received it gratefully.
Satsuki and Shizuno ended up looking at each other's face instinctively.
□□□An ID tag….? □□□
The exact same thing they already had, and with their names carved on them.
Maya showed an angelic smile on her face, then drew near Moroha and the girls and explained in a whispering voice.

– Even if you break one, you will have a spare, allowing you to feign ignorance and avoid writing an explanation desu. Keep this a secret from everyone else nanodesu.
– This is suspicious, very suspicious, Maaya-san’s smiling face is very suspicious.
She giggled together with Satsuki.
– We got something good. Then, here. This is from me to Maaya.
Moroha took one of the Christmas presents arranged in the corner of the room.
– Can I open it desu?
– Of course.
Looking excited, Maya politely opened the present.
– They are matching teacups nanodesu!
– One of them is mine.
– Of course nanodesu. We will bring them back to Moroha’s room desu.
– You really liked that present, Maaya.
Mari said to Maya with a friendly grin and said 「Thank you」 to Moroha with her eyes.
– Matching… matching with Nii-sama… I’m jealous…
For some reason, Satsuki appeared to be stricken, and retreated staggeringly.
Immediately after, she rushed to Moroha and,
– Y-you, you don’t have a matching present for me!?
– Sorry… I do have a present, but not a matching one…
– Eeeeh? I like those too□□□.
– Don’t wish for children’s things.
Satsuki, who brought her face to a point-blank range, replied while being overwhelmed.
At the same time, he hurriedly took a new present and presented it to her.
– Thank you, Nii-sama.
Unable to contain herself, Satsuki opened the rough wrapped box and took out the contents.
It was a deformed stuffed cat. It seemed to be the mascot character of a certain game.
The look in its eyes was very mature, an ennui gaze, and its feature was that it created a somewhat cold atmosphere. It had a cigarette in its mouth too.
Its name seemed to be 「Jigonyan」.
Satsuki made a complex face as she locked eyes with Jigonyan.
– Y-you didn’t like it?
– It’s not that cute…
– That’s weird, I was recommended this. I was told that high school girls would surely love it.
– By whom?
Satsuki’s neck turned 90 degrees, facing his way.
– A woman? It was a woman, right? Another woman, huh?

– W-who are you talking about…?
Moroha feigned ignorance, he would never say the name of Nelly.
He couldn’t look Satsuki in the face and turned to the opposite side.
– I’m an open-minded woman, you know?
Shizuno-san was waiting there!
– But hiding things from me really hurts my chest.
– It’s certainly a woman, but she’s just an acquaintance.
– Is she really just an acquaintance?
He felt the wet gaze of Satsuki piercing him from behind.
– If Moroha says so, I believe him. Thank you for talking about it.
Shizuno looked like a goddeeeeeess.
– Geez! Urushibara is scoring Brownie points right away!
– Yes, the distant howling of those who can’t score points.
– Whaaaat did you saay!?
– You two, don’t fight in a day like this. And in front of a child.
– Maaya will plug her ears, so please don’t fuss over me nanodesu.
– Don’t abandon me, Maaya.
When Moroha wished for salvation and extended his hand, Mari smiled in her place and,
– Ranjou-san. Since you don’t like the stuffed animal, should I get it instead?
– No!!! I’m happy as long as it’s something I got from Moroha.
Satsuki hugged the Jigonyan as if she were protecting her child.
As expected of the school principal, she changed the topic with the resourcefulness of an adult and calmed the situation.
Satsuki talked to Jigonyan while stroking it gently.
– What should your name be? Either way, it’s Nii-sama’s present, so should it be □Moroha□?
– … It seems you liked it, I’m glad.
He had to give her a more faithful-looking stuffed toy.
– Is there anything for me?
– Yes, I do have something for you. Here, this is for Shizuno.
Moroha took a present and handed it over.
The contents were an elegant headband.
After Shizuno stroked it as if treating it with tender loving care for a while,
– Will Moroha put it on me?
She said something unthinkable.
She graciously removed the horseshoe-shaped headband she was wearing now.
– Err, I don’t really get it. I think your hair will be all messy…
– I’m fine with it. Will.You.Put.it.On.Me?
– Are you angry…?
Moroha gave up and nervously put it on her.
Touching the hair of a girl is kind of erotic—no it’s not!
In the end, he couldn’t put it on her well, and Shizuno’s bangs were unbalanced.

Moroha couldn’t help being anxious as Shizuno confirmed that it was compact, appreciating it from various angles.
But—
Shizuno saw herself and the headband reflected in a hand-mirror and showed a smile on her whole face.
Shizuno. That Shizuno!
Satsuki, Maya and Mari had their eyes wide open.
(This sure did it…)
Moroha felt relieved.
Nelly’s choice was good.
– Hey, hey, hey, you are not giving me a ribbon?
– I gave Jigonyan to Satsuki just now, right?
Was this younger sister the embodiment of greed?
– I have alcohol for the school principal. It seems to be a Scotch whisky called Glenmorangie.
– Ara, that’s fantastic. Is that the choice of your little acquaintance-san?
– Well, yes.
Did Mari find that out based on the topic that came out during the day?
Apart from Leshya, who hadn’t come yet, he finished giving presents to all of them.
Then,
– Well then, it’s time for—
– Let’s have Moroha check our presents!
Shizuno and Satsuki sidled up to him from the left and right, each one with a present in their hands.
– Be gentle…
– Don’t leave it as that! Satsuki-chan’s dictionary is missing a few words!
The one moving first was Ranjou Satsuki.
Moroha opened the present while being nervous.
– … A hand-knitted scarf?
A *wooow* flowed in the air. Excepting Satsuki.
– Hey, are you happy? Are you super happy? Because it’s fuuuuuuuuuuuuully packed with my love, absolute warm is guaranteed, you know?
– Yeah, I’m happy. I mean it. ……. But it’s heavy.
As Moroha wrapped it around his neck, feeling anguish,
– I said that elaborated things are prohibited, do you remember? How is this within the means of a high school student?
– At first, I went to buy it with that intention! However, Urushibara instigated me to a match and I—went for it and reconsidered that I had to prepare something. There was no other way.
– You two are doing that again…. Jigonyan doesn’t compare at all with this…
– Hey, look at me, If Moroha treats me better in the future, then we’ll be even.
– —Ignoring that nonsense, it’s my turn next, yes?

Shizuno, who held a present in her hands, pushed Satsuki aside without hesitation.
Satsuki yelled in protest, but she was soothed by Mari with a “there, there”.
The one moving second was Urushibara Shizuno.
Moroha opened the small wrapped package while being nervous.
– … A pair of travel coupons?
– Let’s spend New Year’s Eve together.
– Urushibaraaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!
Satsuki grabbed her immediately.
– Y-y-you! I thought that you bought something dull as a gift for Moroha! When did you change it for tickets with such an open ulterior motive!?
– Ara? Even Satsuki secretly changed her cards, no? We’re even, aren’t we?
– Yes, but no matter how you look at it, this is cheatiiiiiiiing!
– I get it, but wait, wait. Calm down, Satsuki.
Moroha managed to insert a break there.
As Shizuno gracefully fixed her disheveled hair and clothes with an unsurprising nerve,
– Are you a humorless person? Actually, I thought of having Moroha give this to his family.
– Your jokes are bad for the heart.
– My family…? Are you saying I can give this to my aunt and uncle?
– Yes. It’s a long-established ryokan where reservations can rarely be made. Make sure they enjoy it, alright?
– Ah, then, strictly speaking, this isn’t a gift for Moroha…?
– But Moroha is happy, isn’t he?
– Yes. Thank you.
Moroha received them with pleasure.

(If you want to shoot the general, first shoot his horse—nanodesu)
(As expected of Urushibara-san the tactician…)
He pretended not to hear the voices of Maya and Mari.
On the other hand, Shizuno and Satsuki drew near him from the left and right,
– Then, it's about time—
– I wonder if Moroha will announce which gift made him happier!
– I've told you already, don't compete for this kind of thing. It's frankly boorish.
– The feelings of a girl are stronger than boorish!
He didn't understand the meaning of the words, but he was about to be overpowered by Satsuki's force.
Moroha came to his senses,
– Whether you like it or not, both made me almost as happy—
– Can Moroha pour the same amount of juice into two cups without a nanoliter of deviation? It's impossible, right? Perfectly homogeneous equal amounts are nothing more than impracticable theories. I'd like you to tell us which one made you happier, even if the difference is about one nanoliter.
He didn't understand the meaning of the theory, but he was about to be overwhelmed by Shizuno's force.
(Hey, hey, Maaya. Do the three of them always make such tumultuous scenes?)
(Moroha is the owner of a terrible ill fortune concerning women nanodesu)
– I can hear you from here. Please stop smirking and give me a hand.
Moroha appealed to Mari and Maya.
However, Satsuki and Shizuno didn't let go of his arms from the left and right.
– You're happier with my present, right? If you say you're happy, I can give you a lap pillow ticket now, what do you say?
Shizuno sat with her legs out to one side and stroked her thighs.
Shizuno's legs were dressed in glossy stockings.
They weren't too thick nor too thin, and although they looked soft, they were firm too. Moroha gulped saliva, imagining the feeling. He was a boy after all.
– S-sly. T-Then I'll also give him a lap pillow ticket!
– Satsuki's lap pillow ticket? Won't that feel uncomfortable to sleep because there's only the feeling of skin and bones?
– I'm not that skinny!
– By the way, the view from my lap pillow is superb, you know?
Shizuno traced her voluptuous chest line with her palm.
Moroha made a sound with his throat, imagining how he would be looking up at the bust directly from below while Shizuno gave him a lap pillow. He was a boy after all.
– *Ggggrrrrr*, this whole-body erotic weapon…

– Do I take that as a compliment? Ranjou-san has certainly a slender physique, and a beautiful one. But what I'm asking is something else: is that a style that men actually like? Right, Moroha?
– Don't throw it to me.
– I'm throwing it to you. You're the one who have to choose.
– Look, come here, Nii-sama! My lap is fragrant.
– But my lap is fragrant too, you know?
– Am I a firefly nooow?
Having his legs snuggled by Shizuno and Satsuki who sat with their legs out to one side from the left and right, Moroha was about to agonize.
It was the kind of agony that couldn't be shown to the child and teacher.
He was lost in thought, wondering how to escape from this seductive thigh sandwich attack—
– My apologies. It took me more than expected.
Leshya showed up with a momentum that left the front door open.
She forgot to push the bell, probably because she was very hurried; she breathed heavily.
The goddess of salvation had arrived just in time!
When Satsuki and Shizuno were distracted by Leshya, Moroha escaped from their thighs and went to greet her.
– It's okay, we haven't started yet. Come this way and take a seat.
He heard two tongues clicking from behind, but he pretended not to hear them.
– You had something to take care of, right? Are you okay now?
– What I had to do was very personal. To tell the truth… I didn't know what to buy as a present, I was lost the whole time.
– That's so typical of Leshya.
Making her sit between Satsuki and Shizuno, Moroha sat opposite her across the sofa table.
– This is my first time, and without knowing the way of doing things, I was at a loss.
– But the good thing about Elena-san is that she doesn't do things half-heartedly.
Being praised by Mari, Leshya looked a bit shy.
– Did you ask on □5ch□ like always?
– Of course, I created a thread. As usual, the gentlemen taught me a lot of wonderful wisdom. But all the choices they gave me were too expensive for me…
– That's why you were at a loss desu. Maaya and her little allowance understand your feelings desu.
Moroha totally understood her too.
Because Leshya wasn't a regular team member of *Strikers*, she didn't receive a scholarship. She was a boarding student, so her livelihood wasn't an inconvenience. It seemed she got some money from the Russian Division, but she felt guilty about using it privately.

– So, referring to the teachings of the gentlemen, I was finally able to prepare presents that wouldn't cost money, but… will everyone be satisfied with this?
Leshya took out something nervously.
It was paper. To be more precise, they were tickets.
Ten handmade tickets which had "shoulder massage" written on them.
– If you call me, I will come in a flash at any time.
– Although it's you who we are talking about, this is commendable!
Satsuki jumped from the side and hugged Leshya close who was trembling.
– A grandchild doesn't give this to their grandpa*.
*TN: This is an extremely literal translation (this line also uses a super vague verb for non-Japanese people like me).
Even though Shizuno verbally attacked her, she ended up taking good care of the ticket she received from Leshya.
– Y-you don't need it, do you?
– I totally need it.
Moroha also received it with a smile.
Then Leshya made her facial expression brighten enthusiastically and cheerfully gave a ticket to Mari.
When she gave one even to Maya, a child, Moroha and the others couldn't bear it anymore and burst into laughter.
– Even Maaya's shoulders become stiff desu. Children have it difficult these days nanodesu.
And Maya inflated her cheeks, inducing a roar of laughter.
It continued for a while, and as Mari wiped the outer corner of her eyes,
– Now that we are all here, and that we've finished exchanging presents, shall we start again?
– Let's party nanodesu!
At the lead of Mari, Maya handed out crackers to everyone.
She explained how to use it to Leshya, then held them together,
– Happy □□□□□Merry Christmas! Yay!□□□□□
There was one person who still made a mistake.

Everyone ate and drank to their heart's content the food and drinks that Mari had prepared.
The friendly conversation never stopped because what they ate was light pick-up-and-eat food such as BLT sandwiches and canapes.
Mari, who emptied the red wine, was now tipsy and sprayed the sex appeal of the adults.

After they completely ate up the cake, they enjoyed the games that Satsuki had prepared.
Maya was (surprisingly) strong in Othello, chess and so forth, and the sullen Satsuki immediately gave up.
When it came to card games, Shizuno's poker face exercised its power (this wasn't surprising at all), and the sullen Satsuki gave up.
The most exciting one was the DX reincarnation game.
It had a double structure: the first half was 「Deformed sugoroku: the half a lifetime of a person」 and the second half was 「Deformed sugoroku: You are hit by a truck and reincarnated in a different world」. This was a dynamic game in which turning the tables with a single successful move occurred frequently.
In the first half, Moroha succeeded in saving a small amount of money by choosing a hard job as a public servant, but in the second half he was reincarnated into a slime and was checkmated.
Satsuki had reincarnated from a jobless into a great magician, Shizuno had reincarnated from a system engineer into a robot pilot and Maya had reincarnated from a martial artist into an elf. None of them got involved in the battle for the top. Leshya, who had chosen a similarly reliable office worker, became a person who financially depended on a man after reincarnation, but because things were like this, she tried to win, but her calculations were too optimistic and was easily torn to pieces. Life and reincarnation weren't something to take lightly.
They played exhaustively and without stopping—and when they noticed, the clock told them it was nine o'clock.
Everyone became tired after playing, and all of them were in a relaxed mood.
Turning on the unseen TV, they engaged in lively conversation as if remembering.
In the middle of that, Mari said.
– Thank you, Haimura-kun.
– Why?
– Thanks to you, Maaya was in a gleeful mood all day.
Maya was completely asleep on the lap of Mari who was sitting on the corner sofa as if she were a pillow.
– She couldn't imagine something like this for Christmas last year.
Mari stroked angel-chan's head and untangled her golden hair with her hand.
– But I'm not the one who organized it.
Moroha, sitting on the opposite side of the corner sofa, waved his hand, saying, "no, not at all".
– But without you, I think we couldn't have a party without people gathering.
– That's not true. Maaya is the definition of energy and is gifted with charm and personality.

Shizuno and Leshya nodded to Moroha’s words.
Shizuno-san was just about to say 「I wouldn’t have come if Moroha weren’t here」, but fortunately she read the situation.
– I’m the one who should be thanking you. You let us use your apartment. My 「younger sister」 also had her first Christmas party, we had lots of fun.
Moroha looked down.
Satsuki, who became tired after playing, fell asleep and lay her head in his lap.
Imitating Mari, Moroha also stroked her head.
– Ranjou Satsuki said it during the day. “I was so excited about today that I couldn’t sleep last night”.
– Just like Maaya.
– She’s completely a child, don’t you agree?
Moroha, Leshya and Mari chuckled at Shizuno’s comment that sounded like a joke.
What a happy time this was.
Moroha thought so without exaggeration.
He couldn’t help but pray for this to last forever.
But the reality wasn’t as kind as Santa, it would never give a Christmas present around midnight tonight.
It was depressing to think about tomorrow’s school, but it would be appropriate to put Satsuki and Maya to sleep and disband, in other words, disperse past ten o’clock.
If that’s the case, then I should cherish my time with Shizuno and the others for at least another hour, he thought.
—At that very moment.
Suddenly, and without any proper advance warning, Satsuki jumped up.
If Moroha hadn’t raised his head right away, she would have bumped into him.
– What’s wrong?
Surprised, he asked.
Satsuki didn’t reply anything.
No, she hugged her body as if she couldn’t answer and made her body quiver.
– Did you have a scary dream?
He talked to her in a gentle voice.
Satsuki still couldn’t reply.
She just stared outside the window. Unable to take her frightened eyes from it.
This wasn’t something common.
And Moroha remembered that Satsuki had gone through something like this several times in the past.
– Give me a break…
Moroha expressed to himself the dissatisfaction that couldn’t hit anyone.

He cursed his bad luck because he had to say these words on Christmas Eve, on this pleasant day, and when they were all happy.
Moroha asked.
With a stern look.
Is it a 「Metaphysical」?—He said.

Chapter 5: The man called Isurugi Jin

Going back in time a little.
The hustle and bustle of Christmas were foreign to Isurugi Jin.
He turned down the invitation of his friends, ignored *Strikers'* third-year students' gathering and went to the city alone.
He walked on the streets full of white, red and smiles, striding and searching for his younger brother with a surly face.
He still didn't know his whereabouts.
He wasn't worried about things like "Has he been involved in a lot of dangerous incidents these days?". Humans getting sued by □Saviors□ for violence was a thought that ordinarily didn't exist.
What was more concerning than that was the likelihood that his younger brother committed a crime.
How did his younger brother, who vanished without taking enough money with him, continue his life on the run until now?
He hoped he didn't do something like extortion.
And he hoped that, with that money, didn't escape far away.
How long had it been since his younger brother disappeared? His doubts grew stronger day by day.
Isurugi had set a time limit.
He promised the teachers who were worried.
"If I don't find him by the day of the end-of-term ceremony, the search done by my own efforts will be aborted and I will get the appropriate department of the White Knight Organization to send a pursuing party".
A □Savior□ going into hiding was naturally a matter of that much importance.
Now, with the consideration of the school principal, it was just a matter of keeping things from coming to light.
(Don't act rashly… Gen)
As he exhaled a white breath, Isurugi searched the streets thoroughly.
Then, and without realizing, he was walking on a quiet road with private houses lined in a row.
Beyond the fences were bright lights, warm rooms and cheerful voices.
However, Isurugi wasn't shifting his attention to that.

He kept a keen eye on the shadows of street corners, the shadows of utility poles and all places hidden from view.
He looked for his younger brother, without letting his guard down at all.
Because of that—even when someone turned their gaze on him all of a sudden, Isurugi put himself on guard immediately.
It was a piercing gaze from above.
Tracing the source of the gaze, Isurugi looked up.
The private house right before his eyes. A monster was on the roof. It wasn't big. It wasn't much different from people.
At a glance, his impression was that of a human shape.
But at the same time, it was quite unlike the silhouette of mankind.
Two arms extended from the right shoulder. And one from the back, around the kidneys.
Another arm from the left shoulder and another one from the side.
And, on the part where originally was a head, a big arm grew in place of it.
Six arms in total. A six-armed monster, each arm clutched a specialized weapon: a sword, an axe, a hammer, a two-handed spear, an iron ball and an impressive long sword.
That monster was looking down at him.
Even though it had no head or eyes, he definitely felt its gaze.
(This is… an Archfiend…)
Feeling a tremendous pressure just from being glared at, Isurugi let a drop of sweat ran on his forehead.
He didn't have time to think Why is it in a place like this?
However, his thoughts were filled with a sense of danger, that he had to deal with the calamity in front of him.
He felt around for the ID tag in his breast pocket. It was exactly there.
He was also wearing the combat uniform under his coat in case his younger brother wasn't reasonable and rampaged.
He was strangely ready.
Isurugi didn't think he could subjugate a 「Metaphysical」 alone.
I'm trying to finally reach that point someday, he wished, but that had nothing to do with the predicament before his very eyes.
However, it was also a bad move to escape.
He couldn't afford to leave a 「Metaphysical」 alone. It could rampage and cause who knows how much damage.
Isurugi pulled out the ID tag with his right hand and touched the mobile telephone with his left hand.
(I will call for help and gain time until then)
That seemed to be the best move.
He wasn't confident of defeating it, but if it was about power reconnaissance, then that was his specialty. Until Haimura Moroha joined *Strikers*, this was Isurugi's role.
A wide-edged sword was silently manifested from the ID tag.
However—the six-armed Evil Spirit took an unexpected action.

It disappeared into a blind spot, to the other side of the roof.
– Muh…!
Isurugi wrinkled up his eyebrows.
He immediately jumped with 「Godlike Movement」, landed on the roof with a step and followed the whereabouts of the Evil Spirit with his eyes.
The six-armed Evil Spirit jumped from roof to roof like a monkey, distancing itself from Isurugi.
Was the 「Metaphysical」 running away? Impossible.
(… Is it planning to lure me somewhere?)
He had heard that Evil Spirit class had intelligence to at the very least move in response to someone's command. This was a valuable report that Moroha brought back before.
Still, there was no other choice for Isurugi than going after it, but thanks to that, he had time to make a call.
As he chased it from roof to roof, he called the principal Mari.
Mari answered when only one ring sounded,
「Isurugi-kun!? I was thinking of calling you right now」
– I have found an Evil Spirit class. Did you already know about this?
「An Evil Spirit class you say!?」
Mari let out a hysteric voice. Does this mean that she doesn't know?
「Ranjou-san sensed it」
I see, so that's the reason.
「Where are you? Are you alone?」
Isurugi quickly looked around him and told her the area where he was and the direction the Evil Spirit was heading.
「Right now, Haimura-kun, Ranjou-san, Urushibara-san and Elena-san are here with me. I will let them go right away」
– I thank you for that.
Today was Christmas Eve, and those members were enjoying the fortune of meeting together.
Since some time ago, Isurugi had been taking into consideration what kind of tactics he should take if he were to engage an Evil Spirit class.
When dealing with small-sized Evil Spirit class, the 「numerical advantage」, which was the established tactic of the White Knight Organization, didn't work at all.
No matter how many people were gathered, the number of people who could attack all at once would come to light and the rest would end up becoming the so-called combatants.
And since the Evil Spirit class had high mobility, another standard practice, the 「cooperation by means of battle formation」, would be powerless too.
The Evil Spirit class could move and attack repeatedly and turn the battle formation into pieces faster than the dispatch of an order reaching the large force. The allies would be disturbed, without looking like they could be able to oppose it.

And the ultimate victory pattern of 『*Shiroganes* will build a front line and *Kuromas* willprovide them fire support from behind』 wouldn't work. The Evil Spirit class would probably break through the front line easily by making full use of its attack power, vitality and mobility and trample down the *Kuroma* forces who had poor self-defense abilities.
Therefore, the Evil Spirit class was different from the previous 『Metaphysicals』, it was clear how terrifying the enemy was.
The only way to oppose that monster was──to face it by means of a few selected forces consisting only of really powerful 『Saviors』.
Moroha's individual strength went without saying, and Shizuno's hidden power was also reliable.
Satsuki was several levels behind them, but there was no need to worry about her being killed immediately due to her excellent toughness. In other words, there was nothing to be troubled about, they all could be calculated purely as positive fighting power.
He couldn't expect much from Leshya, but he would like Shizuno to have a guard, so she would surely be more than enough to accomplish that role.
In the mind of Isurugi, tactics were put together, simulated and good results were obtained in an instant.
If it was about hoping for even more certainty, then he would like to have Sophia and Souya Manako who had excellent defense and Haruka who had excellent speed and coordination with Moroha. As he chased the six-armed Evil Spirit, Isurugi requested Mari.
– May I have you call Sophia-kun? She should be in the gathering of the third-year students.
『Ranjou-san has called her many times since a while ago, but nobody answers…』
Is this the pattern in which everyone goes way over the top and doesn't even notice the phone calls…?
Thinking that they should get all noisy on Christmas Eve at least, the fact that he didn't give them a warning ended up backfiring him.
– Then what about Souya-kun? She said she would skip the gathering.
『It seems that she turned off her phone…』
Is she on a date, perhaps? Isurugi remembered that she was secretly dating Taketsuru.
– What about Haruka-kun?
『It seems that she can't return from her destination yet…』
Isurugi reflected upon the bad luck that today was Christmas Eve as he grinded his teeth out of vexation.
However, that didn't mean they had no chances of winning.
He had Haimura Moroha.
The most powerful S-Rank there was.
(In short, instead of everyone, I just need the strength of Haimura-kun!)
Isurugi resolved himself.

It would be out of the question if he failed to do power reconnaissance here and he were injured before Moroha and the others rushed.
「Instead, I will dispatch skilled teachers」
– No, that will not be necessary.
Isurugi, who strengthened his decision, politely but flatly refused.
Even though she said “skilled”, the true strength of the teachers was almost equal to that of Rank B. Moreover, they had little experience in combat, and he couldn’t expect adaptability from them which was required in battles with unknown Evil Spirit class.
Additionally, since formations were unusable, improvisation and coordination were required. This wouldn’t be possible without training cultivated with them on a daily basis.
In conclusion, he was grateful for the offer, but the chances of them being a burden would be high.
The name of Tarou Tanaka, who had heard that he gave splendid and unnoticed support in the battle against *Shade*, crossed his mind for a moment. However, as a commander, Isurugi thought that only those who had grasped their own abilities should fight.
– ―For that reason, I would like to request Haimura-kun and the others. I’m hanging up.
「Wait. This is a landline phone, so let’s keep it connected」
Mari hurriedly proposed.
Isurugi understood immediately. With Mari as the relay, the idea was to communicate the state of Isurugi to Moroha and company.
He put the mobile phone in speaker mode and shoved it into his breast pocket with the call still ongoing.
He chased the six-armed Evil Spirit again and increased the speed.
He gripped the handle of the sword tighter again.
However, and as if to match Isurugi, the six-armed Evil Spirit escaped and speeded up.
Why do I feel like it’s luring me somewhere?
He chased it from roof to roof for a short while―then Isurugi saw something nostalgic.
It was the ruins of the shopping mall.
Moroha fought against the nine-headed serpent here, everything was torn down.
He heard that the foundation was all damaged, so it would cost too much to reuse it, and that entrance was prohibited while the arrangement of the plot of land didn’t happen.
The goal to have the huge amount of rubble removed was dropped.
It was a vast plot of land. Therefore, the six-armed Evil Spirit took refuge in that terribly desolated area.
Looking over its shoulder, it showed signs of waiting for Isurugi.
He didn’t think it was a trap.
There were no signs of an ambush.

It was like a performance. As if to say it wanted a place connected to Moroha to be the battleground.
– I have to say, this is convenient for me.
Of course, this meant that he could fight without worrying about his surroundings.
From the mobile phone in his breast pocket, he got a reply from Mari who grasped his location. With this, Moroha and the others would come running without getting lost.
Isurugi, whose anxiety was cut off, stood in front of the Evil Spirit with a gust of wind.
He stared at it with a fixed gaze and took a hassou posture*.
*TN: Hassou posture: To put one's left foot forward and the sword held upright with the hilt in front of the right shoulder.
The height of the Evil Spirit was a little over 2 meters, counting up to the shoulder. Although it was small as a monster, it had a big body if compared to humans. Isurugi was 190 centimeters tall, so, he naturally, had to look up at it.
Its behavior of holding five weapons was somehow boastful.
(Now, this looks like it will be hard to do…)
The experience of crossing swords with a warrior who handled five weapons at the same time was something he didn't have neither in his previous life nor in this world.
Applying the reason of humans to 【Metaphysicals】 was useless, but his intuition was certainly telling him it was close to an incomplete doll. He couldn't find the chance to attack it.
But he told himself that there was no need to be impatient.
He only had to be quiet and steel himself.
And like a stone statue, he held his sword and waited for the move of his opponent.
The point of the sword stood tall, it didn't shake in the slightest as if it were a single line connecting the heavens and the earth.
The swordsman in a hassou posture and the five, six-armed Evil Spirit stood facing each other.
On the winter night, there were no birds, insects or flowers alive in the ruins.
Frozen-like silence. Frozen-like time.
Only the white long breath of Isurugi drifted.
And that breath drifting in the air wavered violently.
The six-armed Evil Spirit charged as if it had grown impatient and a strong wind broke out.
The long spear held on the left side and in the right rear arm pierced the sky, drawing near.
The Evil Spirit let out a shriek and roared.
The monster's heart and malicious intent were transmitted via what seemed to be telepathy.

*—**Aniki**, I became strongeeeeeeeeeeeeer!*
Making Isurugi gaze at it in wonderment.
He knew from Moroha's report that the Evil Spirit class had will.
– You are—Gen!?
A surprise attack was still a surprise attack.
He dealt with the approaching spearhead one beat later.
He parried it with the sword, but without being able to sustain the shock, his body lost its balance.
The Evil Spirit immediately swung down the iron hammer with its two right arms.
Parrying this was difficult. And dodging it was difficult too due to his collapsed posture.
Isurugi reluctantly received it with the sword.
The tremendous physical strength of the Evil Spirit was transmitted to both arms through the blade.
He clenched his teeth and endured it. But,
– Gu… u, aaa…!
Without managing to stand firm, he was sent flying straight back.
Being sent flying like a cannonball, he was driven into a rubble piled up high; fine particles danced in the air.
In the smoke, Isurugi slowly stood up.
His whole body hurt. But the more he forgot about it, the more he couldn't suppress his anger.
He opened his mouth and unconsciously shouted in a thunderous voice at the Evil Spirit.
– You moron!!
How long had it been since he insulted people? It had been too long to remember.
– I'm not asking what you're doing is either good or bad. But… how can you be proud of power given by others!?
Isurugi raged and charged.
He desperately evaded the sword swung by one of the right arms and the spear that was pushed out and added a counterattack, sweeping sideways.
It was a blow fully loaded with the lighting-colored *prana* of Isurugi who excelled at attacking.
Even the Evil Spirit faltered for a moment, and in that interval, he swung the sword diagonally from the shoulder and drove up a cutting slash.
The six-armed Evil Spirit jumped greatly and moved back, probably because it couldn't endure the angry and fierce attack of Isurugi who was like a fierce god.
– Wait!
Isurugi went after it, his eyes opened wide in anger.
But the Evil Spirit waved the arm instead of the head recklessly and threw the iron ball connected to a chain.

Being hit by the piece at the end of the device, Isurugi ended up being completely knocked back.
He used 「High Durability」 on the spur of the moment, but the shock that he received was so much that he hallucinated that his bones were breaking one after another.
—*Look, I'm strooooooong!*
On the other hand, during that time, all three wounds carved on the body of the Evil Spirit were healed.
A jet-black core was buried like a heart in the left side of the chest.
The Evil Spirit class made the thick *satana* that could be called miasma overflow from there and healed the wounds it received.
He also knew this from Moroha's report, but Isurugi got angry at the ridicule scene he saw for the first time. Thanks to that, he cooled down.
He went back to square one.
He held the sword in a hassou posture again.
However, he wasn't going to lie in wait this time. He went forward.
He carefully but reliably closed the distance with sliding feet.
The iron ball came flying there again.
Isurugi slid to the right and let it travel, and at the same time he grabbed a part of the chain with his left hand.
He converted his *prana* into electric shock and from there, he poured it into the chain with all his strength.
The electric current traveled through the chain and reached the Evil Spirit itself, making it receive an electric shock.
Ancestral Arts Light Technique, Isurugi's 「Mars」.
After seeing the six-armed Evil Spirit becoming numb and stiff, he closed the distance instantly.
When one, two strokes of the sword were put into it, the Evil Spirit showed an expected resilience and swung down the axe on his left arm.
Without a moment's delay, Isurugi pulled out his right torso, flowed there as he added a slash and avoided it.
However, the Evil Spirit also used the butt end of the long spear and attacked with its back turned on him.
Isurugi handled it well with the sword as if turning over, but the Evil Spirit also turned his way, spinning the opposite way.
The sword on one of the right arms and the axe on the left arm slashed at him from the left and right.
When Isurugi evaded them, the iron hammer on the second right arm came immediately.
Isurugi was forced into a defensive fight only before the constant attacks in waves.
A sensation like he was fighting multiple warriors at the same time.
He mobilized all his patience, waited for a slight chance and counterattacked by taking advantage of a thread-like slight opportunity, but the Evil Spirit quickly healed its wounds.

—*I’m stronger than Aniki! I’m stronger than Haimura!*
The Evil Spirit used the handle of the spear to mow him down.
Isurugi had just blocked a slashing attack from overhead with his sword, his sides were defenseless.
The handle of the spear was driven into him, and Isurugi bent his body in a shape.
– Guhaa.
He was immediately swung around and flung away.
Furthermore, the iron ball came after him…!
Isurugi, who wandered about in the air, had no way to dodge it. With no other option, he took a blocking posture with both arms, concentrated 【High Durability】 and prepared for the impact, clenching his teeth.
However.
– Come… Saratiga!
A shrieking vigor roared.
Just like a meteor travelling, the sword that was clad in white *prana* flashed.
It cut off the darkness of the night and the chain connected to the iron ball.
– I’m sorry to have kept you waiting, Senpai.
The one who appeared together with a flying-looking leap and swung his sword was Haimura Moroha.
Isurugi looked up at the back of the man who helped him as he landed, performing the art of falling safely.
– Satsuki and the others will come late.
He went ahead first and came to relief him in the shortest time possible.
—*Haimura! Haimura! Haimuraaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahh!*
The six-armed Evil Spirit rampaged even more as soon as it saw Haimura.
Probably because even the weapons could be restored, the iron ball regenerated from where the chain was cut.
It waved that around and swooped it down on him while clanging the sword, axe, hammer and spear.
Isurugi and Moroha separated to the left and right and avoided the charge.
– Let’s attack it on both sides immediately.
Moroha proposed.
– No… I don’t need assistance!
Isurugi said back.
Moroha raised an eyebrow.
Although he asked for help, these were his words. It was no wonder he strangely thought so.
Isurugi felt incredibly sorry.
However, the situation had changed.
– This Evil Spirit class is… Gen.
This was transmitted to Moroha through Mari, so it wasn’t surprising.
– Do you understand, right…? I have to deal with the carelessness of my younger brother!
Isurugi shouted and slashed at the Evil Spirit from the side.

– That’s not correct, Senpai.
At the same time, Moroha also slashed from the other side.
– This is a 「Metaphysical」. It’s not Gen.
They slashed at the Evil Spirit as if passing by one another and ran past it while remaining on their guard.
Isurugi closed his eyes for a moment.
By the time he analyzed the situation, he overcame his own confusion.
– That’s right… I was wrong. This is not Gen.
He looked over his shoulder, held his sword and created a pincer attack posture with Moroha.
Furthermore――
– Satsuki-chan is on the scene! I have arrived!
– We are here to assist you, Isurugi-senpai.
Satsuki and Shizuno carried in Leshya’s arms also arrived.
The power reconnaissance and time-buying were over.
The situation to begin the offensive was ready.
Isurugi raised his voice and issued instructions.
– As you can see, the enemy is an individual specialized in close combat! However, the reach of the iron ball is unexpectedly long, so be careful!
Moroha nodded exactly as he dodged the iron ball attack.
– Don’t make formations such as Trident! I’ve decided that Haimura, Ranjou and I will attempt close-range attacks! The enemy has excellent attack power and vitality. Prioritize defense and support of your allies over damaging it! Elena doesn’t need to take part in the attack, you will defend Urushibara to the last.
The instructions of Isurugi felt like they flowed.
The captain of *Strikers* wasn’t showing off. It was his specialty.
「We are the “Saviors”!」
A command instead of an assault signal.
「「「We are the “Strike” for our people, our peace and our justice!」」」
Everyone except Leshya said in unison.
Isurugi leapt upon the Evil Spirit from three sides with Moroha and Satsuki.

From halfway up a mountain, the situation at the ruins of the shopping mall was perfectly seen.
However, this only applied to Shiba Akira’s 「Clairvoyance」 who had an extraordinary *prana*.
A little less than two kilometers apart.

A chair was prepared on the roof of an abandoned motel, and from there, he could calmly view the battle between the six-armed Evil Spirit and Moroha and company.
– It started….
Without taking his eyes off the battlefield, Shiba started talking to the one beside him.
– It’s too far, I can’t see.
Usako expressed her dissatisfaction while taking a good look.
– It cannot be helped. If we get closer than this, they may be able to sense our gazes….
For example, if we talked about “Invisible”, who was part of *Six Wings*, he would achieve something like that.
It was unknown whether or not Haimura Moroha’s sense range extended to that person, but he had heard it was quite perceptive.
– Which one is superior?
– It just started….
– Who do you think will win?
– Fufu. We are encamping here because you expressly wanted to see it, right?
Very interesting stuff were the best.
How far would this Evil Spirit, that used a boy selected by “Invisible” as a core, go against Haimura Moroha*?
*TN: Haimura Moroha is the furigana reading for touchstone.
Or was it better to reach extraordinary merits?
– Usako, which one do you want to win…?
– Haimoro.
– You are unwavering….
Was Usako’s wish really going to come true?
Shiba paid attention to Moroha who was far away.
More precisely, he paid attention to the sword he had in his right hand.
From the mansion of “the witch of the prison”, he got to see the clearness of his Dark Arts and the way he fought with his bare hands.
He saw that sword for the first time.
A sword as beautiful as a treasure in itself.
However, it was by no means a decoration used for courtesy, it felt intimidating.
– It’s almost scary…. It feels like the heat reaches even this place.
What kind of technique would Haimura Moroha show with that sword?
It would be really interesting.

Right now, what was in the right hand of Moroha was the real Saratiga.
Before leaving Mari's apartment, he exchanged ID tags with Satsuki—of course, not the one he received today as a present—but the one he usually used.
The ID tag in which the present name of the medium of the holy sword was chased and the *prana* of the medium was poured every day.
Using that, he would perfectly manifest Saratiga without ever failing. He didn't understand the principle.
But in the end, this was a world of sensations, not logic.
As long as the means were definite and could be fully manifested, it was fine. Its sword blade was as beautiful as a mirror.
Moroha caused white light *prana* to overflow and slashed at it, letting out a war cry.
– Suraah.
He aimed at one point, at the handle of the long spear pushed out to keep him in check.
The shimmering of the sword flashed, cutting it off.
This rendered the left side of the six-armed Evil Spirit defenseless—
– Come, Arciel!
Satsuki plunged into it.
She made her sword manifest, let golden *prana* ran through it and splendidly cut the thick arm that grew from the left side of the Evil Spirit in two.
Satsuki's 「Venus」, which had an extraordinary amount of *prana*, had that much power.
And her beloved sword, albeit small, had a nice effect on it. Although it wasn't a match for the holy sword Saratiga, Satsuki's clasped sword was a treasured sword handed down from the royal family.
According to the memory of Flaga, the engraved signature was Kannagi no Tsurugi Arciel*.
*TN: Flaga is the furigana reading for "previous life". Also, Kannagi no Tsurugi means Medium's sword.
And in Moroha's memory, Satsuki was able to fully manifest her beloved sword quite fast after enrolling.
Satsuki seemed to excel at powers that imagined things, which could be called the power of imagination.
However, at the beginning, she couldn't use 「Venus」 which let *prana* remain in the sword, so the famous sword became worthless and was destroyed many times during battle.
Now, as one could see, even if Satsuki let an excess of *prana* run through it, it didn't trigger a self-disintegration; instead, it showed the true real ability of the famous sword and functioned wonderfully as a vessel for focusing destructive power.
– Eat another one!

Satsuki unleashed the long sword with energy and was caught by the axe on the left arm of the Evil Spirit.
Immediately, sword and axe crossed each other more than ten times.
Meanwhile, Moroha took on the two right arms of the Evil Spirit.
The sword and iron hammer of the Evil Spirit were alternately dispatched with a momentum that didn't give him time to breathe.
Moroha parried them all with Saratiga and managed to dodge them.
—*I'm strooong. I'm really strooooooooooooong!*
The arm of the side of the Evil Spirit that Satsuki cut in two and the spear that Moroha cut regenerated.
Holding the part near the spearhead, it pushed it forward, without piercing Satsuki.
Satsuki was hectic dealing with the axe, she couldn't afford to deal with two weapons at the same time.
– That was close.
Moroha jumped, dodging the sword and iron hammer of the Evil Spirit, and at the same time, he intersected with Satsuki and helped her cut off the arm of the Evil Spirit that pushed out the spear one more time.
The Evil Spirit flinched from the pain for a moment, and Satsuki, who took advantage of that chance, severed the left arm holding the axe.
It became an improvised coordinated play.
There was no time for Moroha to be pleased. Because the iron ball of the Evil Spirit who recovered was aiming at him.
He waited for it in a Natural Stance, but,
– Oooh…
Isurugi cut straight down the Evil Spirit from behind. The tempered, polished and severe *prana* shone, cutting open the Evil Spirit that instead of having a head had an arm holding an iron ball, and made the blade pass through the area around the pit of the stomach.
(As expected of the captain)
Moroha jumped backwards while shouting with exultation in his mind.
Both Satsuki and Isurugi distanced themselves from the Evil Spirit.
– Everyone, move back for a moment.
There was a signal from Leshya.
In her arms, Shizuno had completed a Dark Arts.
– Show me The extreme point The beauty of eternity that is not destroyed by anyone And where not even those who destroy exist.
She hit the magic characters written in the empty sky and that extended over five lines with a fingertip as the end mark.
Immediately, a snowstorm broke out, took the form of a dark being and swooped down on the six-armed Evil Spirit.
The 5th rank of ice, 【Blizzard Dead】.
It hit it directly, became a white storm and ran wild on the ground surface.
Because the great magic was 5th rank, its power was enormous.
Was it unbearable, even for the Evil Spirit class?

Moroha stared at the center of the raging localized snowstorm.
In the white storm, a shadow moved.
—*I'm the strongest 「Savior」, you aren't going to catch meeeeeeeeeeee!*
He heard a howling-like scream.
The six-armed Evil Spirit jumped out of the storm.
The damage of 「Blizzard Dead」 was completely regenerated. The arms cut off by Moroha and Satsuki were also back to normal. The deep wounds carved by Isurugi were also completely healed.
And the six weapons had disappeared.
Instead, it carried a halberd with a handle of ten meters in its hands.
It held it with all its six arms, and raised that monster-looking, pole-shaped giant axe overhead.
The muscles of its six arms swelled, and with a momentum that he couldn't imagine how much physical strength was put into it, it swung down the halberd until it landed.
Its aim was Leshya and Shizuno.
The super-giant weapon buzzed, and the air-tearing aftermath reached even Moroha.
– Leshya!
– I will protect Shizuno.
Leshya jumped and avoided it just in time, and Moroha nearly felt relieved.
He wasn't actually relieved because the attack of the Evil Spirit wasn't over.
All the six arms swelled again, it stood firm on both legs, changed the trajectory of the halberd that was swung down with all its might by sheer force and kept mowing them down.
Its mowing range was extremely large.
Moroha, Satsuki, Isurugi, Leshya, all of them had no choice but to jump high in the sky and escape.
This situation was bad.
While floating in the air, *Shiroganes* had no way to move.
—*Eat the strongest blow of me, the strongest ooooooooone!*
The six-armed Evil Spirit swung around the halberd while rotating, trying to mow down everyone in the air all at once.
– Sing Sing Spirit of thunder Abandon everything in the blink of an eye!
Moroha spelled at high speed and shot the 1st rank of thunder from above.
Concluding at the exact same time as him, Isurugi also fired a lightning of 「Mars」.
Two lightning flew in the night sky and thrashed the Evil Spirit from the front and back.
Getting an electric shock and losing its aim, the halberd flew through the air excitedly.
The Evil Spirit quickly healed its wounds and regained its footing, but Moroha and company gained time to land in free fall.
On the contrary—
– The chains of hell will not release any dead they catch.

Shizuno used the 1st rank, 【Bind】, coiled a jet-black chain around the handle of the halberd and bound the Evil Spirit as if hooking it to the axe-head.
– Satsuki!
– Leave it to me!
When Satsuki grabbed the end of the chain,
– Soooooooiiihh!
Like throwing a fishing line, she threw the giant body of the Evil Spirit with her characteristic 【Strength】.
Moroha was often amazed by the surprising combination they showed in battle.
The Evil Spirit crashed into a mountain of rubble, making debris and smoke blow upwards.
– Don't let your guard down, everyone.
Moroha and company nodded to Isurugi's warning.
Of course, nobody thought that this much brought down the tough Evil Spirit.
It went without saying that not forgetting to give them a warning felt like they relied on the captain's over seriousness.
And they could get enough time to wipe the sweat on their foreheads.
Everyone regained their breaths and held each of their weapons again.
By then, the debris and smoke were settling down.
The silhouette of the Evil Spirit emerged and showed up from within the slowly-moving smoke.
The halberd was gone.
Instead, it held a strong bow that was two and a half meters long in its hands.
– It seems that it has mastered any weapon.
Shizuno lamented,
– Then being on guard won't do it.
Leshya glared at the specialized weapon in the hands of the Evil Spirit with an open and suspicious gaze.
The Evil Spirit slowly readied the bow with its left arm and, of all things, nocked five arrows with its remaining five arms.
Since the bow was huge, the arrows were huge too. Each one was like a javelin.
– What's with that nonsensical posture?
Satsuki made a wry face and laughed mockingly,
– Stop measuring the behavior of the 【Metaphysicals】 with our common sense!
Isurugi warned.
—*Each and everyone of you is so weeeeeeeeeeeeeak!*
The six-armed Evil Spirit fired five arrows.
The sound of the giant bow ringing echoed as if stabbing the heavens.

Since its stance had collapsed, the fired arrows were even more unbalanced, each one of them came flying in completely different trajectories, aiming at Moroha and company.
A wind-cutting sound as if howling.
Their force similar to a cannonball.
However, if Moroha and the rest were compared to their power, not even them would lose.
Moroha brandished his sword.
Satsuki and Isurugi did the same.
It seemed that what he thought was what they thought too. Was this also the result of daily coordinated training?
The three of them let their *prana* overflow from the sword blades—
– Suraaah.
– Uryaah!
– Oooohh…
They violently swung their swords and released.
The *Ancestral Arts* Light Technique 「Jupiter」.
The wind of destruction exerted its violence and crunched the approaching arrows into very small pieces.

Chapter 6: A malice similar to wildfire

The car driven by Mari finally arrived at the ruins of the shopping mall.
When it got safe, the car was roughly stopped at the entrance of the site.
Maya was sitting in the passenger seat.
When she was telling Moroha, who was still on the move, all the information that was transmitted from Isurugi's mobile phone, he requested that Maya was brought with her.
She wanted to drive at max speed if possible, but it took a lot of time from the apartment to this place because it wasn't a mountain pass but an urban area, and there were traffic lights and congestions because it was Christmas Eve.
– I wonder if I can get *that* for moments like this. An unmarked police car siren.
– Next time, we'll try requesting one through the Japanese Division desu.
She cracked a joke with Maya to mask her irritation then got out of the car.
– You did well.
A man showed up as if quietly emerging from the darkness.
Mari was surprised, but when she saw him properly, he was Tanaka Tarou, the one in charge of Class 1-1.
She asked him over the phone to meet up here.
– You came early, Tanaka-sensei.
– It's because I have 【Godlike Mobility】.
Tanaka sounded like he was joking, but that wasn't the case.
Before meeting up, he was asked to search for Sophia and the others and tell them about the Evil Spirit class.
– I finally found them a moment ago and requested their help.
Tanaka reported, making a serious face.
– Then, are Sophia-san and the others on the scene?
Mari turned her gaze to the inner part of the ruins of the shopping mall.
Weapons clashing, explosive flames bursting, furious snowstorms rampaging and sounds and signs of a fierce battle came to where they were.
– No, not yet. I told them to go back to the dormitories and get ready without panicking. If they aren't ready and have the tables turned on them when meeting it, it will defeat the purpose.
– That certainly can happen.

Mari was impressed with Tanaka’s explanation.
Those who weren’t able to endure the fierce attacks of the Evil Spirit class were nothing more than a burden. Unlike fighting against a regular Metaphysical, they couldn’t form a front line to block the movement of the enemy, so they couldn’t pull their allies backwards to make them rest or treat them with Dark Arts.
Since Tanaka completed the job really fast, his assessment of the situation in times of emergency was accurate.
For this reason, he was much more reliable than Mari, and she was proud of being blessed with a good teacher.
– I will go to where everyone is. Tanaka-sensei, can I ask you to be my guard?
– I’m ready to do so… but won’t you take a quick look at the situation?
– Is it so dangerous inside?
Mari examined carefully the inside of the former shopping mall.
Maya clung to her, feeling nervous.
– Of course, it is not safe, but… something quite unexpected has occurred.
– Unexpected…
She ended up getting excessively anxious because she was told a thing like that.
– What happened to Moroha and company desu?
Maya couldn’t help but ask,
– Good gracious… I didn’t expect this to occur, but…
Tanaka said with transparent eyes as he stared at the inner part of the ex-shopping mall.
In a state like his mind wasn’t here but somewhere.
With a tone of voice that felt more like talking to himself than a reply.

How much time had passed since the start of the battle with the six-armed Evil Spirit—?
Moroha felt a strong uncomfortable feeling.
And the one who harbored doubts was Moroha only. Nobody could notice the preconditioned problem.
The opponent was an Evil Spirit class that regenerated itself with *satana*.
He was prepared, but the battle was dragging on.
Moreover, in accordance with the situation, the six-armed Evil Spirit changed weapons every moment.
Now, the weapons it was wielding were a short sword, a woodman’s hatchet, an adze, a sickle, a covering for the back of the hands and a shield.

The attacks of the Evil Spirit kept going while the fierce attacks of Moroha and the others were steadily making the Evil Spirit exhaust its *satana* from its core. As if it had lost its temper in that situation, the Evil Spirit transformed the weapons into more versatile ones and equipped them with a means to defend itself.
—*I'm strong, I'm strong, I'm strong, I'm strong, I'm strong, I'm strong! I'm impeccably strooooooong.*
Recklessly swinging the short sword, woodman's hatchet, adze and sickle around, the six-armed Evil Spirit yelled while facing Satsuki and Isurugi at the same time.
Moroha whispered in his mind as he prepared a Dark Art a little away from it.
(To be honest… this guy **isn't that strong**)
The uncomfortable feeling and doubts were turning into conviction.
No, of course he wasn't saying it was weak.
As far as Moroha was concerned, if the Evil Spirit was compared to Dreadnought class and Stronghold class which were only the targets of 「Mars」, then it was a far more formidable enemy.
However, if compared to the headless Evil Spirit that used the soul of Flavie or the Silhouette Evil Spirit that used Kashiwaba Gen'ichi as the core, then it was considerably weaker.
He had fought this much, and yet, it never got into a scrape.
(Only its stubbornness is super first-class…)
It was full of life even when receiving multiple attacks from Moroha, Isurugi, Satsuki and Shizuno who excelled at attack power one after another; it could be said it had more self-regeneration powers than the headless Evil Spirit.
However, Moroha appraised it as a meaningless regenerative power.
The six-armed Evil Spirit attacked by all possible means, but to put it bluntly, it wasn't that threatening, and thanks to that, they attacked to their heart's content and in high volumes.
If compared to a game, no matter how much HP this boss monster had, if the damage they dealt was big, then that HP was more like a decoration.
He tried thinking the opposite.
The HP of the Silhouette Evil Spirit "Shade" was poor. However, its movement was tricky and its evasion ability was excellent, it didn't let Moroha or Haruka make very clean hits. As a result, the battle with *Shade* was long and tough*.
*TN: HP is the furigana reading for regenerative power.
– Come, howler Shapeless blow And invisible iron hammer
Moroha put ancient magic characters into written form in the empty sky.
The 2nd Rank 「Breeze Mace」.
A fierce gust of wind blew and struck the chest of the Evil Spirit like a giant blunt weapon.

Without enduring it, the Evil Spirit tottered and Satsuki began to charge as if she had been waiting for it.
From a stance that maintained a distance from it, she added 「Godlike Movement」 and 「Strength」 and suddenly and forcibly accelerated.
The multiplied high-speed, rushing way of walking that crowned the name of the Big Dipper's sixth star, 「Bukyoku」.
She gathered the penetrating power at one point, at the point of the sword, and hit the left leg of the Evil Spirit.
And Shizuno's 「Blizzard Dead」, which was cast and all again and fired, came after it!
Swallowed deeply by a white storm, the voice of anguish of the six-armed Evil Spirit roared.
After the *mana*-created local storm vanished, it was Isurugi who stood in front of the crouching Evil Spirit.
Holding the long-used sharp sword above his head, he caused the lightning of 「Mars」 to overflow from the sword blade.
– ……
It was unclear what he was thinking based from his facial expression that looked down on the Evil Spirit with a surly face.
Tsun, the sword slashed it diagonally from the shoulder.
From his swordsmanship, one could see his spirit and sternness that gave the feeling of cutting ties with his blood relative.
Slashing it, burning it and making it become numb at the same time, the sword blade cut deep into the top of the shoulder of the Evil Spirit.
—The strongeeeest….
The six-armed Evil Spirit pumped out *satana* like hot water from the core of its heart and overbearingly regenerated its body completely.
However, the core grew dull in color each time it was pumped out.
At first, it was jet black, but in the end, it was about to reach a light color.
—The title of the strongest 「Savior」 is miiiiine!
The six-armed Evil Spirit stood up.
And at the same time, it threw the short sword, woodsman's hatchet, adze and sickle in all directions like a boomerang.
Of course, Moroha, Isurugi, Leshya and even Satsuki calmly saw them all and dodged them easily.
—I'm stroooong! Stronger than Anikiiii! Stronger than Haimuraaaaaaaa!
As Moroha told Isurugi, this Evil Spirit wasn't Gen.
However, this cry was the thoughts and wishes themselves inside Gen.
Or one could say his deep-rooted delusions and egotism.
He was used by the 「Demons」, prepared as an Evil Spirit and employed.
(Gen… you pitiful man…)
Let's end this.
Moroha wrote ancient magic characters with his left hand and chanted them silently.

There is purgatory in the realm of the dead There are burning fields on earth
Flames become equal, burning good, evil, chaos and everything to exhaustion A purifying intense mercy
Everyone Dies and returns to skull Now, start the ceremony of cremation
The 3rd Rank of flames, 「Incinerate」.
The Dark Art that Moroha was best at.
Consequently, it was spontaneous──but it wasn't entirely accidental that he chose this technique now, which was used as the finishing blow when he fought Gen before.
And, unlike the time when he was able to barely reproduce it, relying on his vague memories of his previous life, the spelling speed of Moroha now was at a dexterous level, it produced a magnificent style.
It was the materialization of his continued study with everyone of *Strikers* during the six months Gen stayed indoors.
The three-line phrase written in the air was torn with a sword, causing *mana* flames to dwell in the sword blade.
He poured even more *prana* into it and synergized it with *mana*.
With a Yin Yang work that was only allowed for Moroha, it cut deep into the six-armed Evil Spirit.
With that, it was over.
Holding Saratiga in a waki-gamae stance, he mowed down the Evil Spirit as they passed each other*.
*TN: Waki-gamae is a stance where the swordsman hides the length of his sword blade behind his body, only exposing the pommel to the opponent.
The sword blade cut off the left arm, chest and core that had lost its magical power of the Evil Spirit with almost no resistance.
After a moment, the six-armed Evil Spirit went up in flames like a bonfire.
After being severely hit by Moroha's Yin Yang and with no more *satana* left to just regenerate, the six-armed Evil Spirit burned out immediately,
──*I'm strongeeeer, and yet….*
The one-last scream echoed sadly in the mountain of debris.
And gradually disappeared.
The stillness of the frozen night was restored.
Moroha lowered the sword and took a big breath.
With that, his skin remembered the coldness of the outside air, but it was still impossible to cool the heat of the battle.
He took a breather, stopped and turned around.
He turned a stern look to the remnants of the burning Evil Spirit.
Satsuki ran up to him, showing an innocent smile on her face,
– We won, we won, our love won, Nii-sama! We are the victors, we are the victors」.
She clung tightly to him.
– Yeah, we did our best effort. But don't lower your guard.
Moroha flatly told as he calmed her.

He pointed to Satsuki who showed a question mark floating on her head.
The embers of the still smoldering Evil Spirit.
Light began to rise up from the broken remains.

A firefly-like fleeting and scattering brilliance.
It let loose an even more subtle and profound appearance under the cold winter sky.
Drops of light gathered in one place as they danced in the air.
They were trying to take some form.
– Hmm□?
Satsuki made the gesture of straining her eyes.
Actually, without doing so, she plainly wouldn't know.
– Gen…
The one who muttered while having a stern look was Isurugi Jin.
Yes, it was the appearance of Gen that the clustering faint lights formed.
However, its brilliance was so weak that it was just like a pointillist painting still in the middle of being painted.
Despite being able to see it clearly when it was Flavie or Kashiwaba.
Gen's soul appealed to something, but his voice was too thin, it didn't reach them.
Eventually, the form came undone as if being out of time and was swept away by the wind.
– Hey, hey, Moroha? Isn't this terrible?
Satsuki asked fearfully with upturned eyes.
– Did you realize this late?
Shizuno, who was brought down by Leshya, said as if being amazed.
During the joint operation a month ago, all the bodies of the victims whose souls were pulled out were rescued and now they were protected by the White Knight Organization and the governments of many nations.
However, this wasn't the case for Gen's body. After hitting Tanaka and going into hiding, this happened. They guessed that he was probably captured by *Six Wings*.
This was the worst of the worst; they couldn't deny the fear that now he would be killed after having served his purpose.
– W-what are we going to do…?
Satsuki alternately compared with the eye the face of Moroha and the face of Isurugi who didn't try to be delighted at all even though they had won.
Instead, Leshya opened her mouth,
– It's okay, Ranjou Satsuki. That's why Moroha called her.
She turned her eyes to the entrance of the ex-shopping mall.
Being lured by her, Satsuki also looked in that direction.
To say nothing of Isurugi, even he opened his eyes wide and turned his eyes nervously.
As everyone's gazes gathered, human figures could be seen together with sounds of running steps.
The one leading the way was Tanaka Tarou.
The ones following behind him were Mari—and Maya.
– Then, see you later.

Moroha gently touched Satsuki’s shoulders once and then stepped forward to Maya.
– Eh? Eh? Where are you going?
Satsuki still seemed to be confused.
– Shizuno. Can you explain her please?
– As you command.
He left it to Shizuno who answered with a funny tone of voice.
And, when he passed by the side of Isurugi, he bowed his head as if he had realized the situation.
– … I’m sorry. I leave my younger brother in your hands, Haimura-kun.
– Understood.
Moroha deliberately took over it with a lighthearted tone of voice.
And faced Maya,
– Are you ready?
– 100% and ready to go nanodesu.
– Then, one, two──
They said in unison.
Flutter, fluttering wings of the phoenix As light and pale as sparks Release me Untie me from the constraints of gravity immediately
【Decrease Weight】 was invoked and their weight approached zero as much as possible.
Moroha easily embraced Maya in one arm and ran as he readied Saratiga in his right hand.
The target, the soul of Gen, was on the verge of disappearing into the western sky.
And ran after it with 【Godlike Movement】.
As he was being sent off by Satsuki, Shizuno, Leshya, Mari, Tanaka and Isurugi.
Moroha ran, holding Maya in his arm.
The speed at which Gen’s soul flowed was outrageous.
With the same theory as an airplane, its appearance flying far away in the sky was slow, but if he relaxed his attention, he would be shaken off.
Moroha shook his head frantically, checked the whereabouts of the soul and the state of the route alternately and maintained the maximum speed he could have.
He dashed under the moon and on the asphalt like a shadow, jumped over the buildings like a nocturnal bird and kept chasing it.
Not even Haruka could do it like him.
A chase that could only be done by Moroha, a Yin Yang user who synergized 【Godlike Movement】 and 【Decrease Weight】.
– This may take a long time. Maaya should rest properly, yes?
– The Moroha car is warm and the ride quality is extraordinary nanodesu.
Let’s run after it until the end of the earth like this desu.
The smiling face of the angel, of the companion who leant in close to him, was reliable too.

As if to respond to it, Moroha ran, getting even more motivated.
A small mountain could be seen ahead.
The road went along it, but it was a zigzagging ascent.
If he ran along the road, he would end up losing sight of Gen's soul which was flying straight.
Moroha jumped over the guardrail without hesitation and ran swiftly on the trackless path.
If there was a cliff, he would jump over it; he would jump up and down the trees as footholds and travel at an impossible speed even if there were wild beasts.
Moreover, doing so while half looking away in order to follow the brilliance of the soul in the sky with his eyes was truly a feat.
If there were branches and leaves blocking the way ahead, he would lop them to open a path. It could be called consideration so that Maya wouldn't get hurt from getting stuck with them.
And Moroha and Maya saw.
The brilliance of the soul that was flying in the sky like a falling star disappeared into the middle of the mountain as if being absorbed.
– He was there nanodesu? He was unexpectedly close desu.
Far from the end of the earth, it was about two kilometers away after leaving the ruins of the shopping mall.
– We don't know yet…. But let's go anyway.
Moroha hurried to the area where Gen's soul had disappeared.
Catching sight of the public road and confirming that it continued straight in that direction, he rushed out of the animal trail and followed the asphalt.
Before long──Moroha arrived at the parking lot of a motel that came to be a haunted house.
Gen's soul disappeared around here.
In other words, Gen's real form was probably inside this abandoned building.
And probably there were 「Demons」 protecting his real form at the same time. The 「Demons」 custodied more than a hundred people in the belly of the Stronghold class.
Namely, if the real body that became an empty shell wasn't in a perfect condition, then something that was an inconvenience for them would arise.
For example, if the real body was killed, then the 「Metaphysical」 that was created using the soul of the real body would disappear or lose the capability to control it; those were the situations they would fall into.
Therefore, if Moroha's guess was correct, then Gen's real form wasn't going to be left as is inside the abandoned building.
Therefore, Moroha brought Maya because he anticipated a battle with「Demon」.
When he brought Maya down to the ground,
– I leave the preparations to you. As fast as you can.
– Got it nanodesu.

Stroking Maya’s head, he took the lead and headed to the abandoned building with the sword in one hand.
With slight quick steps. However, as he carefully searched for a presence in the surroundings.
– I have never thought… this would happen.
Moroha stopped his feet.
He suddenly heard the voice of a man.
Even though it reverberated like a whisper, it reached him strangely well.
He would never forget it even when listening to it once.
That tone of voice of the one who called himself a 「Demon」, who loved loneliness and who indulged in reading when imprisoned some time ago.
Moroha turned his eyes towards him. Towards the rooftop of the gravestone-like abandoned building.
A man in a suit stood there.
When he looked up, what met Mohora’s eyes was his appearance having the style of a king, as if he were carrying the heavens on his back.
– The idea of pursuing the soul and trying to locate the real body didn’t cross my mind. “No way? Really? Is that possible?” I ended up fixing my eyes upon you unconsciously. Thanks to you, I have… found it.
The sharp eyes behind the thin frame glasses were turned his way.

The man standing on the rooftop of the abandoned building.
The man he once met at the mansion of the “witch of the prison”.
Moroha looked up at the rooftop,
– Aren’t you making an “I’ve been found” face?
He shrugged his shoulder with only his free left arm.
– I don’t have a mirror, so I don’t know what face I’m… making. The Evil Spirit class that I had worked so hard to prepare was incredibly disappointing, and on top of that, it made the mistake of being tracked down by the frightening you, so I’m overcome with surprise, you know?
Shiba smiled faintly like the devil of a story.
He was a master at it. It wasn’t a facial expression that ordinary human beings could do.
A famous actor—the real deal?
However, Moroha also laughed boldly,
– I didn’t come to listen to your needless retort. Where’s Gen? Please give him back.
– If I refuse… what will you do?
– You’re surprisingly stingy.

– Fufu. He’s no longer useful, so it’s not like he’s valuable or anything. Even if you kindly tell me to give it to you, it would set a bad example to my comrades. I also have this thing called “position”; yes? It’s a troublesome… thing.
– To sum it up, if I take him back by sheer strength, then you’ll save face, right?
– Yes. If you can do… that.
– Yeah, yeah, I know.
Moroha housed intimidation in his eyes as he attempted at humor with his mouth.
In all honesty… He wasn’t that much indignant at Shiba for toying with Gen’s soul.
But Moroha ended up seeing it.
The figure of Isurugi Jin searching for his younger brother under the cold winter sky, giving up even the holiday.
Because of that, he had thought of doing something to Shiba. It was natural.
– You’re being suspected of various things. Should I beg you to accompany me to the police station?
Moroha assumed a stance while showing a fearless smile.
The sword in his right hand. He threw out his chest and took a half step forward with his right foot.
A Natural Stance in which the power circulating through his body wasn’t stagnated anywhere.
The color of the *prana* he was clad in was certainly whiter than white.
– I ask you to go easy on me. It has been four years since I really… fought.
Shiba assumed a stance while showing a devilish smile on his face.
He didn’t take out any weapon. He threw out his chest and stood with his hands put together behind his back.
An **Unnatural Stance** that didn’t seem to be a fighting posture and in which a waste of exertion of power was put into all over his body.
The color of the *prana* he was clad in was redder than red.
An aura that shone like a flame.
As soon as he saw it, sparks rang the maximum warning in Moroha’s head.
However, Moroha laughed even more daringly,
– Nope, not a chance. Don’t you remember what you said in the mansion? You said “You don’t need to try it, I’m no match for you” you big liar.
– It’s not a lie. I know my weaknesses well. I’m different from you… the 【Ancient Dragon】.
– You’re giving me too much credit. I’m not that much of a deal.
He wasn’t wasting each other’s breath because he lost heart.
He was waiting.
Behind Moroha, and at a distance,
– The adjustment is complete nanodesu! Ei!
Maya used both hands to shoot the crystal she took out of the pouch into the sky.

The crystal melted into the atmosphere as if it were an illusion, becoming a faint twinkle and spreading throughout the whole area.
When the wave of light passed through Moroha's body, he felt a strong drowsiness for a moment.
Shimon Maya's *The Origin,* 【Field of Dreams】.
With this, the environs would be transformed into a mystical barrier which would be restored in a few hours no matter what calamity experienced, and it didn't matter how wounded they were inside of it, they would be healed if they went outside of it.
Moroha could fight with Shiba with all his might and with no hesitation, remorse or consideration.
– Do your best nanodesu, Moroha!
Finally, Maya encouraged him.
That was the signal.
– Surah.
Moroha jumped to the rooftop with a step and vigor.
He held aloft the sword and sprung at Shiba.
However, Shiba didn't meet him.
He lightly jumped backwards, his hands still on his back.
Even though he didn't put much effort into it, he flowed backwards for tens of meters.
He mustn't be fooled by his medium build. A ridiculous 【Strength】.
The reason he moved back was very obvious.
Even if they were inside the mystical barrier, he had the consideration of not wanting to involved Maya in the battle.
– You're a gentleman, huh.
Moroha also jumped and chased him.
He landed in a large forest behind the abandoned building.
– I'm nothing but timid. It's scary when Mari-kun gets… angry.
Shiba jumped backwards in a big way again with a thump.
Moroha pursued him right away.
– You're the devil so please don't say pitiful things.
– Originally, that's how the devil is. That's why I am so crafty. Real powerful people aren't… necessary, are they?
Thump* *Thump… Shiba continued moving back like an apparition, like the devil that invited humans to the depths of the thick forest.
– I'm reluctant to recognize a muscle-brain as a real powerful person.
And Moroha drove him to a precipitous cliff.
No, considering that their distance from Maya was enough, Shiba waited for him there.
A huge amount of *prana* gushed out from his whole body.
It swayed and danced like a flame.
And gradually began to wear real heat.
This usually impossible phenomenon was—
– Is that 【Mars】?

– Correct.
The flame-resembling red *prana* of Shiba turned into a not-metaphor flame.
However, the flame didn't spread in the forest at all. It didn't even spread to the undergrowth.
What didn't need to be burned wasn't burned—it was perfectly controlled.
It was the exact opposite of Moroha, whose power was so strong that rampaged, whether it was an incantation, 「Mars」 or something else.
To the point of envying him.
– Now… shall we go?
Despite declaring that, Shiba didn't make a slight movement.
But a number of small flames diverged from the flame he wore.
Flames similar to fiery balls.
They danced in the air alluringly, and when staring at them, he fell into the illusion of being sucked in by them.
They strangely revolved in the air and rushed his way.
While increasing their heat and volume!
– Nyaro….
Moroha sent *prana* to his sword.
The cluster of fiery balls was too numerous to avoid, and above all, their trajectories were hard to predict due to their unstable movements.
Then the only choice was to engage them.
The *prana* running on the blade unleashed big sword waves.
He tried to blow them out all at once with 「Jupiter」—but the swarm of fiery balls swooped down on him aimlessly, without caring if they were directly showered with a wind of destruction.
Far from disappearing, they didn't sway nor slowed down in the least with the wind.
With no other option, he tried to lop them off with the *prana*-loaded Saratiga, but the sword blade only slipped through.
– Uoohh.
Moroha was forced to avoid the approaching fiery balls with all his might one by one.
He dodged the one aiming at his feet by jumping; dodged the one coming from overhead by crouching; if they came from the right, he went to the left, if they came from the left, he went to the right; he was pushed into a difficult situation.
If he didn't dodge them exaggeratedly, he would be flooded with severe sparks.
Did the fiery balls lose their floating power after a fixed period of time?
They fell to the ground, still burning.
However, the vegetation around him still didn't catch on fire.
Shiba's flames burned only what he wanted to burn.
And didn't let them touch what he didn't want to touch.
It was unbelievable, but the phenomenon just now couldn't be explained without thinking so.

Maybe it was closely related to Moroha's 【Mars】.
A conceptual flame, and not a physical igniting ability.
It was beyond cheating.
Moroha shouted as his combat uniform was sooty here and there.
– I think I get what your 【Mars】is.
– This one is called the First Flame, 【Kitsunebi】*.
*TN: Kitsunebi means will-o'-wisp.
– Isn't it embarrassing to name your own original technique?
– Fufu. Yes, it is. But it's not me who named it like that, so it can't be… helped.
Shiba laughed lightly, his hands calmly put together behind his back.
In the meanwhile, and with a nice personality, he created 【Kitsunebi】 one after another.
How nasty.
– You have fully realized too, haven't you? We S-Ranks are famous drugs called idols. If you're allowed to be the vanguard, your allies will encourage you and you will forget your fears. The spread of flashy news, the exaggerated dramatization and embarrassing technique names are all tricks for making better drugs. Due to adults'… circumstances.
Accompanied by countless fiery balls, Shiba was like the King of the Dead.
A second group of 【Kitsunebi】 was fired.
Dancing in the air aimlessly, they swarmed him as if they were pestering, playing and messing with him.
The dodging just gradually became poor.
He had to attack. First, it went with Moroha's nature.
He estimated it would take him five steps to reach Shiba with 【Godlike Movement】.
First step: he moved forward while avoiding the 【Kitsunebi】 that came flying diagonally form the right by moving diagonally to the left.
Second step: he dodged the fiery ball that came flying from the front by doing nothing more than crawling on the ground.
Third step: he jumped and evaded the flame that came flying from the back in a low trajectory.
——As soon as he took the third step, blazing flames burst from the ground powerfully.
– Gaaaaah.
Moroha reflexively jumped back and tried to endure them with 【Resist Magic】.
Unlike 【Kitsunebi】, these flames could be resisted with *prana*.
But they couldn't be defied.
The firepower of Shiba's 【Mars】 was incredible.
– That's the Second Flame, 【Shiromuku Tekka】. In plain words, it's like a… landmine.
*TN: If read literally, it means "White and pure iron flames".
– Shit.

Moroha, who was burned because he couldn’t overcome them, witnessed the third group of 【Kitsunebi】 approaching while making 【Inner Life】 run all over his body.
He wouldn’t be able to make his sword reach Shiba unless he survived this fierce attack.
Even if he went through it, he didn’t know where and how many landmines were set.
After declaring “go”, Shiba hadn’t stepped forward yet.
On the contrary, he hadn’t succeeded in even making him move.
He was furious.
– Ooooooh.
Moroha roared and jumped very high in the sky in a big way.
– Did you think my 【Kitsunebi】 couldn’t fly high?
The third group of fiery balls changed the trajectory and unsteadily chased him, going up.
If he were a mere *Shirogane*, it would be a checkmate.
Moroha jumped and put ancient magic characters into written form with his left hand.
– That shapeless blade That invisible inscribed sword Come, render.
The favorite aerial technique of Moroha that sent forth a gust of wind with the 1st Rank of Wind and turned it into propulsive power.
He flew in the sky in a straight line and held his sword aloft, aiming at Shiba.
– I see…. Being able to use both makes it difficult to predict what you will… do.
Shiba talked to himself in a way that was difficult to discern whether he was troubled or composed.
Either way, Moroha didn’t have to hesitate.
He struck the sword against his shoulder from above, slashing him diagonally.
—Or so he thought and saw.
There was practically no response in his hands.
Instead, Shiba’s appearance became vaguely hazy.
Namely, an afterimage.
Moreover, it wasn’t an ordinary afterimage.
As soon as it became hazy, it turned into a flame and tormented Moroha.
– Guuaaaa….
With the second direct hit, Moroha let out a scream of anguish.
– This one is called the Third Flame… 【Kagerou】*.
*TN: Kagerou means heat haze.
The whispering voice of Shiba could be heard well in spite of being in the middle of an intense pain.
Avoiding the slash, Moroha took distance from him while being burned by 【Kagerou】.

He moved without saying it was something small, but the price was too high.
Moroha clenched his teeth while enduring the pain of the burns that his whole body complained about. The Third Flame 【Kagerou】.
Its true form was a combination technique of Shiba's 【Mars】 and the way of walking that created afterimages, 【Komon】.
(It's well elaborated…)
Moroha regained his posture with his sword as a walking stick and ruminated as he glared at Shiba.
The【Kitsunebi】 could attack from outside his range, it couldn't be intercepted or defended against, and was difficult to even slip through it.
As for the opponent who managed to slip through it, it was repelled by a minefield of 【Shiromuku Tekka】.
Furthermore, when even that was breached, 【Kagerou】 attacked them with a strong counter while avoiding them with taijutsu.
Shiba's tactics really made sense.
They were simple and clear. But the simpler the tactics the more difficult the burden and the way to deal with them were.
As expected of an S-Rank 【Savior】.
The unparalleled sixth person.
He could do nothing but be astounded.
And at the same time, he was convinced.
This guy is the strongest 【Mars】user in the world.
When he noticed, Moroha was surrounded by flames.
Before he knew, the forest had become a sea of fire.
However, it was a fantastic sight, the vegetation wasn't burning at all.
The number of 【Kitsunebi】 that remained fallen on the ground increased and connected, becoming something like this.
In a place similar to an arena surrounded by a wall of flames, he stood facing the devil who showed a faint smile on his face.
Maybe this was Shiba's unrivaled domain.
– Fourth Flame… 【Ryougen no Hi】.
– Heh. That was really well polished.
Moroha smirked at Shiba's sincerity that tried to break his heart by deliberately explaining so.
It was clear for Moroha, even if he weren't going to explain it or something like that.
He had been scared of fighting ever since he fought Charles.
– You're a rare *Shirogane*. You hate close combat.
Moroha put an index finger in the air.
And wrote characters in the empty sky with *mana*.
3rd Rank of Ice, 【Freezing Shade】.
A sub-zero wind manifested, attacking Shiba like a tsunami.
– You have ways to fight even if close combat is an impossibility—I think you are… the rare one here.

Shiba stopped putting his arms together behind his back for the first time.
He kept his left hand on his lower back and waved his right hand horizontally.
The surrounding flames changed shape as if that was a signal, concealing the front of Shiba as if closing the castle gate, protecting him from Moroha's cold wave.
A steam explosion occurred immediately.
A mist hung over, moistening Moroha's skin.
When it cleared up, Shiba, who had his left hand on his lower back, laughed lightly with his right hand hanging down.
– We were even… just now. Since that's the case, why don't you try using a higher level of Dark Arts?
He raised his right hand and swung it down toward Moroha.
Then, this time, an immense number of fire arrows were shot from the surrounding flames, which came flying at him from all directions.
– I greatly welcome your proposal──
Moroha held his index finger again.
Shiba's 「Mars」 had a lot of firepower, a wide attack range and trickiness, but also had a weakness.
It was slow. When judged from the battle speed range of the *Shirogane.*
However, it was far faster than the *Kuroma* and their terribly slow spelling.
No matter how far the spelling speed of Moroha was from ordinary people, Shiba didn't give him enough room to write a 4th Rank or higher.
– ──But no thank you.
Because of that, what Moroha would write from now on wouldn't be great magic.
But the absolute basic. The foundation of the foundation.
– The power that does not allow any kind of heat come near me…
He engraved a mark as if cutting the void with his left fingertips. At the same time, he used his left toe to reach the ground.
Two red barriers surrounded Moroha right away.
Double 「Red Hex」.
In addition, he burned *prana* together with a war cry and deployed a triple protection by means of 「Resist Magic」.
And just charged straight ahead.
Immediately, a huge number of fire arrows rained incessantly on his whole body, burning him.
Moroha endured them.
He solely clenched his teeth and endured them.
He aimed at Shiba's position recklessly──
The tactics of Shiba were simple.
Therefore, Moroha had to fight more simply.
Offense was easy and defense was hard.
Consequently, Moroha had to go beyond common sense.
Shiba said.

You have ways to fight even if close combat is an impossibility—I think you are… the rare one here.
That struck home.
That sounded very similar to the words of Charles some time ago.
The great number of people who can do it find it very difficult to strengthen their resolve.
That irony.
– O—ooooooooohhhh.
Moroha ran at a simply honest full speed.
He was showered with fire arrows that fully covered his field of vision, stepped on a number of landmines and kept running while being smeared with fire.
He roared like a beast and wrung out *prana* and *mana* from the seven gates and soul.
This was a battle between power and power.
A collision where his life was at stake.
Would Shiba's offensive overwhelm Moroha immediately? Or would Moroha's defense surpass Shiba's firepower?
It was primitively simple.
That was why he could knock down Shiba's simpleness*.
*TN: Simpleness (original word is simple) is the furigana reading for tactics.
That was why he succeeded in making Shiba gaze at him in wonderment.
The distance of five steps felt like an eternal purgatory.
Moroha tried running those five steps.
– Chieeeeeeeeee—
He showed his spirit and brandished the sword with both hands.
And slashed.
Faster than Shiba who was about to use 「Kagerou」.
Merely faster.
The fresh blood of Shiba, which was redder than flames and his *prana*, danced.
– **Heavy breathing* … *Heavy breathing*… *Heavy breathing*…*
Moroha was breathing heavily, he was in a state in which he supported his body with his sword as a walking stick again.
He squeezed so much willpower, *prana* and *mana* for just five steps.
Moreover, he was suffocating.
The surrounding area had become a real sea of fire.
The vegetation was burning, raising smoke, and about to eat up oxygen.
Shiba's control went dead or became loose.
– Gu… u…
That Shiba was crouching and putting up with the pain.
The diagonal cut from the top of the shoulder was—a fatal wound.
It didn't mean it would lead to immediate death.
However, Moroha's plan was to cut a little deeper and stun him.

With an agility that surpassed Shiba, he was able to escape at the last moment.
– You look like you're about to die, but you unexpectedly crave for life, don't you?
– That's a compliment, isn't it.…? Thank you.
Shiba showed a smile of self-deprecation on his face while sweating.
– I acted brave with a cool face, but I was desperate in my mind. You are my… opponent after all.
– Liar.
– I'm not lying. I said it, didn't I? I'm no match… for you.
Without replying, Shiba changed the quality of his smile.
To a faint smile, to one that the devil showed frequently.
– I'm no match for you.… But what if it's **us**?
As soon as he said so, the sea of fire suddenly split into two behind Shiba.
As if opening a path.
In fact, someone came from that way that was born.
With the heat haze swaying, only a shadow could be seen, making it unclear who they were.
Even when looking for a sign, it was hard to grasp.
However, because it was hard to grasp, Moroha suddenly understood.
– Nelly…?
– Good evening, Haimoro. Did they happily receive the Christmas presents?
A familiar face appeared through the path of flames.
Her unique absent-minded facial expression that always looked like spacing out.
When she had that large fire in the background, she ended up looking like a Goddess who transcended the spirit and earthly affairs of humans.
Her black casual dress suited her well, it enhanced her divineness.
Moroha looked up at Nelly who came all the way to his side while supporting his body with the sword.
– Yeah, thanks to you. You aren't wearing Santa clothes today?
– Today I'm giving out sorrow, so I'm in a black rabbit mode.
– Is that the present you are giving to me?
– Correct. But before that, this is the sincere return gift of the white rabbit who received a Christmas present from Haimoro.
Nelly leaned forward and gently put her lips on Moroha's lips.
A stimulating feeling, like a momentary spark.
Because of that, they separated right away.
A tasteful Christmas gift.
– Any thoughts?
– Not bad.
– Haimoro has high expectations.
Nelly turned on her heels and returned to Shiba's side.
She became Kuroi Usako and lent him her shoulder*.
*TN: Her last name is Shiroi which means "white" and Kuroi means "black".

Moroha recalled the words he heard from her at the witch's mansion while seeing that happening.
He confirmed only once.
– *You can't leave him alone?*
– *Nope. I can't leave him alone.*
If so, it cannot be helped.
Now they were mutual enemies.
– … I'm sorry.
Shiba stood up, borrowing Usako's shoulder.
The forest fire that was spreading licentiously was quickly put under control, calming the force of flames.
It became docile like a servant, bowing its head to the King and Queen.
As Moroha complained fearfully,
– But isn't it cowardly to go 2 VS 1?
– The one who praised me for craving for life was you, yes?
Shiba, who had lost the blood in his face, grew pale and replied bravely.
– If a person stops living, it loses its meaning. I'll do anything to live and keep living.
His face, which was smiling thinly, didn't feel like the face of the devil, but like the face of a martyr.
Probably because of the flames illuminating him.
– I so agree with you that I can't object.
Moroha scratched his head.
Usako declared as if treating him with tender loving care and with a goddess-like vague facial expression.
– It's okay. There is the mystical barrier of Maaya after all. No matter how injured you are, it only hurts, yes?
From her whole body, the same shimmering *prana* as Shiba rose up.
They both had a perfectly identical color.
This was a first for Moroha.
□□Now, go□□
Shiba and Usako declared in unison. The surrounding flames flared up violently.
Like a force of fire that pierced the heavens.
Not only that, they covered the night sky fully in the blink of an eye.
Moroha was trapped in a dome of fire with Shiba and Usako.
– Her □Mars□is very unique. It enhances my… □Mars□.
– I am gasoline.
A rain of fire rained torrentially from the top of the dome.

Moroha encouraged himself, stood up and tried to endure it with Double 「Red Hex」 and 「Resist Magic」.
But it was like a drop in the ocean. It wasn't an unsurmountable firepower, but his combat uniform caught fire here and there and began to burn.
– If the last one was a wildfire, then this is a scorching hell, yes?
Holding his sword and without stop worrying about the burns, Moroha laughed extremely gruesomely.
– Haha. Unfortunately, it doesn't haven an extravagant… name like that.
Shiba pointed to the vertex, his face still pale.
Moroha opened his eyes wide.
An incredibly huge raindrop was about to spill over and fall from the dome of fire.
However, he was aware that that impression was wrong as the falling drop changed its shape.
To be more precise, it should have been described as a fetus being born.
The drop of fire slowly fell while growing limbs and stretching its neck, and by the time it landed on the ground, it had already become a giant of fire. A 10-meter tall monster.
– *Oooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo.*
It let out an ear-piercing roar, as if being pleased with its own birth.
It protected Shiba and Usako and stood in front of Moroha.
– The Fifth Flame, named… 「Akaoni」*.
*TN: Since the term can have numerous interpretations, I'll just leave it as that. What could mean is: red-horned demon, red ogre, or red/crimson/scarlet ogre/demon/oni.
– It is hell, isn't it!?
Moroha yelled in protest when he saw the imminent flame giant letting out a rumbling-like roar.
Its movement was much slower than 「Kitsunebi」's movement.
However, he felt a tremendous pressure.
If he was grabbed by its giant hands, it would be the end, all kind of resistance would be pointless and he would be burned to nothing without leaving any bones.
It was obvious to the eyes of Moroha who read various information from the color of the *prana*.
Was this the deadliness of this duo?
If so, he would abandon defense.
And attack recklessly.
Wondering which had the upper hand, if Moroha's attack or the duo, they would make it clear.
Would he win and laugh? Would he lose and be killed? Or would they kill each other simultaneously?
Three to two was the gambling of ruin.

He cancelled 「Red Hex」, left all the rain of fire that burned him to 「Resist Magic」only and thrust his index finger to them while raising fire from all over his body.
– Write──
Only Shiba and Usako were in Moroha's field of vision.
The rain of fire and the burns of his body had disappeared from his consciousness.
He chanted with all his heart and wrote in the empty sky as if scribbling quickly.
Land of despair Bone-chilling sky Lend me your breath To freeze even the soul
Even the prosperous ones inevitably dying are the divine providence of the world The law given by God is an inescapable karma
Take away all heat Like water flowing to a low place
Show me the world where everything came to stop As if even time was frozen
I am a person who refuses to understand A person who seeks only the absolute
Show me The extreme point The beauty of eternity that is not destroyed by anyone And where not even those who destroy exist
Ancestral Arts Dark Art 「Bright White Frost」.
He hit the extensive and intricate characters that extended over six lines written in the empty sky with the sword as the end mark.
– That work was showed… a short while ago.
– Have a match with our 「Akaoni」.
– I like that, it's a match then!
Instead of letting the great magic grow wild and manifest at the same time, he let it dwell in the sword blade.
The micro-sized, extremely cold hell created by collecting the best *mana* of Moroha was further condensed.
Moreover, he concentrated, stacked and combined *prana* on the sword blade.
The extremely cold hell on the blade increased its atrocity.
Mobilizing strength, work, weapons, heart and soul──and everything he had now, Moroha's Yin Yang put power on top of power.
If Usako was Shiba's gasoline, then Moroha was like a kiln that solely fused power and power*.
*TN: Power and power mean mana and prana.
And no matter how much power was poured into it or the burden put into it, the genuine Saratiga would bear and meet the expectations.
He caused it to go to the next stage.
A secret that the White Knight Organization would later call as 「Ecshkish」.
– Raaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah.
He cried and raged and slashed.
He jumped──to the palm of the flame giant who stretched its arm.

An intense white light glistened, drilling into the sword blade.
Moroha's Yin Yang and Shiba's 「Mars」 collided.
Cold air and flames.
Extremely low temperature and extremely high temperature.
The phenomenon called heat that possessed two conflicting sides fought each other directly opposite.
– Ruaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah.
– Ooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo.
Moroha's lion's roar and the giant's roar reverberated all over the dome of fire.
Without yielding to the other.
They weren't winning or losing alternately, nor did they move in the slightest when pushed or pressed.
A huge aftermath was generated from one point where they collided, and that in itself became a shock, spreading out.
It shook the dome of fire, blowing through the upper part of the dome. The night sky showed itself through the hole again.
Suddenly, something made a creaking sound.
Cracks developed in Saratiga's sword blade—no, it wasn't that.
Cracks were produced in the palm of the flame giant—no, it wasn't that.
It was the world itself that began to crack.
In reality, it was either accomplishing becoming unparalleled or competing for supremacy, and the forest, earth and atmosphere shook and broke only with the aftermath generated from that friction.
Countless cracks ran in the void, even in front of Moroha.
An omen of collapse.
The rest took one breath.
The space shattered into pieces, as if a fragile glasswork had been thrown into the floor.
At the same time, drowsiness attacked Moroha for a moment.
A drowsiness strong enough to damper his fighting spirit and make his concentration which had been sharpened to the utmost limits sever.
The world completely changed when he shook his head in denial and dismissed it.
The forest that became a sea of fire and the dreadful flame giant had disappeared once and for all.
As if they were ephemeral.
The calm moon stood still in the night sky, and the forest fell asleep peacefully.
When it became silent, he could even hear the chirps of owls.
Moroha looked around in mute amazement while still holding his sword at the ready.
It was the same for Shiba. He touched and confirmed that the wound of the cut he ruthlessly should have been received was completely gone.
Without changing their faces, they looked at each other.

□□……□□
Neither Moroha nor Shiba said anything for a short while.
The same expression appeared without haste on both facial expressions while holding their tongues.
A facial expression of understanding and agreement.
In other words, the collision between Yin Yang and □Akaoni□ was so tremendous that Maya's mystical barrier couldn't withstand it before which one was better was decided.
The dreamworld crumbled and Moroha and the others returned to the real world which wasn't a sea of fire.
The sword bathed in desperate thoughts and the subsequent obstinate conflict went back to square one.
Don't kill the fun! Even if he wanted to complain, no one could be blamed.
The feeling that the heat of the battle that had been burning brightly from a while ago was rapidly cooling down inside Moroha.
Even so, smolders would forever remain.
Half-hearted feelings were very irritating.
Probably Shiba had the same feelings, he was making an indescribable bitter face.
– It's a draw.
Nelly suddenly came out with that.
That surprised Moroha.
– That's all for today. It's over. I am put in charge of this battle. That's why, it's a draw.
As always, Nelly forcibly separated them with her usual vague face.
– Or will you still do it? Until one of you dies?
They were hit with frank but inescapable words.
Moroha had no choice but to move his neck to the left and right.
It went without saying for Nelly, she understood it well when crossing swords with him.
If she did it without Maya's mystical barrier── she would end up losing her life──even if she won.
That wasn't what Moroha really wanted.
Never.
(Well, it can't be helped)
He stubbed out the smoldering fire in his chest with the power of his will.
To begin with, he couldn't fight with this strong enemy with such half-hearted feelings*.
*TN: Feelings is the furigana reading for enthusiasm.
Moroha lowered his sword and Shiba turned on his heels.
– I really lost the motivation to fight. Fighting with you is a very… bitter experience.
– Bye bye, Haimoro.
Shiba raised his face, straightened up his back and walked away composedly.

Nelly followed him afterwards lightly.
Moroha followed their backs disappearing into the mute forest until they were out of sight with his eyes..
The fire in his chest had gone out completely.
What filled it instead was—
(I have to think of something before I meet them next time)
A silent determination.

When Moroha went back to the road leading to the motel,
– Nii-sama!
– Moroha.
– Morohaa!
– I'm glad you are safe.
Satsuki, Shizuno, Maya and Leshya came towards him.
Maybe the well-behaved Maaya-san indicated their location with the cell phone and called everyone.
Surrounded and hugged by Satsuki, Shizuno and Leshya, Moroha ended up being mobbed.
– Because there's Maaya's mystical barrier, it was settled without problems.
He laughed and replied, but,
– But, but, I was worried because the mystical barrier disappeared abruptly desu.
Maya, who was standing alone a bit away from them, said in a voice that sounded like she was about to start crying.
– Maaya's mystical barrier isn't useful, actually, I am too ashamed to Meet Moroha desu.
She looked down and lost heart.
– That's not true.
Moroha smiled at Maya.
– Without Maaya's mystical barrier, I would have collapsed from the burns about now.
He beckoned.
With that, Maya's facial expression shone with energy,
– Welcome home nanodesu.
She clung to him with everyone.
Moroha stroked her little head and comforted her.
– More importantly, did you find Gen?
– Of course, that man has been secured already.
– He was in that place that looked like a haunted house, he was rolling like a sea lion. I know it's imprudent, but I ended up laughing.

– No, don’t laugh, Satsuki. Where is he?
– In the car of the school principal, and transported to the hospital a little earlier. Isurugi-senpai and Tanaka-sensei accompanied them.
Hearing the report of Shizuno, Moroha felt relieved.
– After carrying Gen-onii-san, Mari-onee-chan will come back to pick us up desu.
– I feel bad about it, so let’s go back on our own. If we use 「Godlike Movement」, we’ll go back in no time.
Saying so, Moroha instructed Leshya to run with Shizuno in her arms, he would do the same with Maya who couldn’t use 「Godlike Movement」.
– Ara? I’m fine with Moroha too.
However, Shizuno didn’t leave him, she clung and stuck to him.
– If so, then I’m also fine with Nii-sama!
– C-can I claim that too?
– You guys can use 「Godlike Movement」, don’t you?
– Nii-sama is so unfair, this is favoritism, favoritism!
– Yes, favoritism, favoritism!
– I’m not unfair, and this isn’t favoritism, this is an obvious conclusion.
Don’t let Leshya learn strange words.
– I would like Satsuki-onee-san and Leshya-onee-san to be reasonable here desu (happy face).
– I’m with her. Being admonished by a child is no good.
– How do you say that so impudently!? Urushibara is an opportunist, all because you get to be carried in Nii-sama’s arms!
– The privileged class always tries to protect their interests under the pretense of aiding society… however, the future is only waiting for a revolution, Shizuno.
A not-sophisticated-at-all quarrel broke out, and because of that, they couldn’t descend the mountain at all.
Moroha plugged his ears, making a sullen face as he wondered what to do.
But at that moment——
Suddenly, something crossed his field of vision.
White things were falling sparsely from the sky.
Satsuki and company involuntarily held their noisy tongues.
And everyone looked up all at once.
It was snow.
Beautiful pure-white powder snow flew down all over their field of vision.
– White Christmas, isn’t it? So romanti□□□c.
Satsuki frolicked like a child.
– What happened to the snow?
It was strange that the Russian-born Leshya tilted her head to the side.
As for Moroha, he felt like he had a stroke of luck somehow. He wasn’t raised in the northern provinces, so it was his first experience having snow falling on Christmas day.
Feeling uplifted, he wanted to look at the snow-laden sky for a moment.

– But wait—
The disquieting voice of Shizuno-san….
– W-what is it?
– I had heard that the weather forecast was 100% sunny all day until tomorrow…
– Uh…. I saw it in the news this morning too….
– Then why is it snowing? Did the Japanese Meteorological Agency make a mistake?
Satsuki stared in puzzlement.
The eyes of Shizuno, Maya and Leshya moved slowly.
To Moroha.
– Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait! It’s not my fault at all.
– Did you forget that you made snow fall in June?
– I didn’t use an incantation today.
– Are you saying you didn’t use some kind of powerful Dark Arts of Ice?
– I didn’t! … I don’t mean that, but since I was fighting in the mystical barrier of Maaya, there’s no way that I affected realityyyyyyyy.
– But Maaya’s mystical barrier ended up disappearing in the middle of it desu.
– Nii-sama used too much force and destroyed it?
– I-it’s not my fault onlyyyyyyyy.
The more they talked, the more his eyes became wet.
– Then, I’m having a White Christmas for the first time. I’m happy.
Moroha pretended to return to a childlike state and hurried on his way back home.
Then four people followed him closely,
– I’d like you to be at ease. It’s not like we are blaming you for it.
– Rather, it’s a nice production, Nii-sama!
-It’s the best gift nanodesu.
– It’s cold. Will you warm me up?
Leshya clung to his left arm, Shizuno clung to his right arm, Maya clung to his waist and Satsuki clung to his neck.
– You are tough, aren’t you…?
Even though Moroha complained, he let them do what they wanted and went down the mountain road with everyone.

Epilogue

Gen woke up three hours later in the hospital that was under the patronage of the Urushibara family in the city.
Isurugi Jin, who was watching over his younger brother who kept sleeping soundly in the bed of a private room next to him, felt a little relieved.
Gen didn't say anything for a while as he stared at the ceiling.
At first, he seemed to be spacing out, and before long, he made a face as if pondering.
Without saying anything, Jin waited, sitting on a chair.
Eventually,
– … Was Haimura really an S-Rank?
Gen muttered a few words, his eyes fixed on the ceiling.
– Even if you form a group, you can't beat him.
Jin replied frankly.
Gen jumped up immediately.
– Why didn't you tell me!?
He flared up as if he had caught fire.
He opened his eyes wide in anger, sent saliva flying and yelled.
– Why didn't you ask?
Keeping his composure, Jin asked back with a subdued voice.
– "How is Haimura-kun doing"? "What's going on at school?" Why didn't you just ask me that? You've had many opportunities to ask me over the phone in the last six months, haven't you?
– Ugh…
Gen suddenly faltered.
– Even if you lose to Haimura-kun, you still can't convince yourself about it, you're unable to have respect for the winner, you fixed upon him and made light of him for not being very strong, you just felt good in your heart, you didn't try to know Haimura-kun. You were haughty. Am I wrong?
– That's… not… the case at all…
Gen tried to deceive him by speaking ambiguously.
His vigor was only good at the beginning, it grew weaker and weaker.
– That's why I didn't tell you.
Jin braved the feeling of sadness and continued admonishing him.
– You should have gone to see Haimura-kun. You don't have to gloss it over with things like apologizing. You should have faced your defeat earnestly. And you should have seriously thought about what will you do from now on.

That’s what an independent human being would do. I’m sure I told you, didn’t I?
Jin stood up straight and straightened himself.
– Think for yourself, decide for yourself, fight for yourself—these are the most necessary qualities for a “Savior”.
At the same time as he remonstrated Gen, he felt he was admonishing himself.
– You have to grasp this resolution yourself. There’s no point at all in having this told by people forever. That’s why I didn’t say anything.
– ……
Gen hung his head and kept silent.
He didn’t say “Yes” or “No” or “That’s not it”.
Jin waited patiently, but he said nothing.
He breathed a sigh as he looked at the clock.
Since Gen had recovered consciousness, he wasn’t going to stay in the hospital for too long.
He finally said.
– I heard from Tanaka-sensei that you seem to have acquired the strength fitting of a C-Rank. That’s huge.
He asked straightforwardly.
– Why don’t you join my unit? You have the qualifications now. Let’s go for more together.
He waited for a reply.
– ……
Gen finally opened his mouth and answered, his head still hanging down.
– … I’m going to transfer to another school.
Jin let out a sigh of disappointment.
A sigh so deep he thought the air in his lungs had gone.
– Is it because of Haimura-kun?
Gen, who was hit by a precise blow, stiffened his face.
– Haimura-kun doesn’t care about it anymore.
– That’s not the problem! I have no face to go to school, do I!? The class will definitely laugh at me!
– As for those who want to laugh, it’s best to let them laugh. You just have to keep working hard earnestly. Until no one laughs at you.
– Strong guys like Aniki don’t understand the feelings of the weak!
Gen turned his face bright red and criticized him, thrusting his finger at him.
Jin was dumbfounded, he couldn’t help not listening to him.
– Do you remember what Haimura-kun said when you had a bout with him months ago?
– Huuuuuuh? Don’t ask me to remember anything from the past!
Gen frowned and raised hell.
Jin remembered it clearly.

At that time, Moroha said to Gen who hurt and cursed at Satsuki who was still weak,
– “You’ve known that once, the feelings of the weak”.
And—
– Don’t manipulate the conversation, Aniki!
Jin replied while bearing empty feelings to Gen who kept attacking even more.
– Just so there is no confusion, I’m not strong at all. That’s why I want to be stronger. I want to go further than now. I want to be on par with Haimura-kun. For that reason, I will spare no effort. … That’s what I think. Isn’t this what you call the feelings of the weak?
He answered sincerely, including something he had never revealed to anyone: the desire of being an S-Rank.
Then Gen,
– Buhahahahahah! Are you serious!? You thought about such an outrageous thing!?
He burst into a great laughter, held his sides with laughter,
– I thought Aniki was an incredibly stubborn person, but this is unbelievable! Wahahahahahahahha—
He laughed off Jin’s feelings.
– Think for a minute, alright, Aniki? Aniki quickly became an A-Rank in a year, yes? But since then, you’ve been unable to go further than A-Rank!
– That’s right. To be honest, I think I can’t go further than A-Rank. When looking objectively at it.
– If so, isn’t it a waste of time and effort!?
– You aren’t wrong. But that’s no more than a □reason□, it’s not a □reason□ for me not to give my best.
– How come you don’t get it!? I didn’t think Aniki’s head was this gullible!
Gen’s scorn didn’t stop.
Jin took it calmly.
He wasn’t angry. He wasn’t disappointed.
He was the one undoubtedly saying something strange, and Gen was being pretty down to earth about it, that was all.
The hands placed on both knees and the stretched back muscles didn’t shake in the slightest.
– I’m relieved knowing that you’re well.
Jin slowly left his seat.
– I will tell the teachers about the transfer. I am sure you will be picked up later. We’ll be going separate ways, but you will be fine.
– Aniki, do your best to become an S-Rank… puhahahahahaa!
Those were the farewell words of the brothers.
The farewell words of the brothers who couldn’t understand each other until the end.

□□Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way ♪□□
Satsuki and Maya sang and made merry in the apartment of the school principal.
□□ Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one horse open sleigh yaay♪□□
They were in high spirits while cutting the whole cake.
Leshya didn't know the lyrics, so she matched the rhythm by clapping to the beat.
– Certainly, it's still Christmas, but…
Moroha checked the clock. 23:48. Christmas Eve would keep going for another 12 minutes. Or rather, even if the date changed, it would be Christmas day, no?
– Even though something like that has just happened, you all look lively…
– Because that happened, we obviously have to be like this! We're too awake, we need a destination for the adrenaline that came out!
Here, I have portions for you, Satsuki began to hand slices of cake.
Even though they ate a while ago. On the way back from the battle with Shiba, Satsuki and company, who happened to see unsold items being sold at a cheap price, got another helping. The scary things were no more.
– What about tomorrow's school…?
Moroha grumbled again and Maya replied.
– Moroha and the others, who were hurt in the battle, have the natural right to take a break from school nanodesu (happy face).
– No, we aren't hurt.
When he said so, the only one who was injured was Isurugi Jin who performed power reconnaissance against the six-armed Evil Spirit.
That said person,
– I will be with my younger brother until he wakes up. Everyone should rest now.
He showed concern to Moroha and the others.
Shouldn't it be the opposite?
– The cake is deli□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□cious.
– Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way ♪.
– I've understood that Christmas in Japan is very nice.
They didn't listen to him.
– Haimura-kun should also accept his fate and enjoy himself.
Even the right-minded school principal (or who should be) began to say a thing like that. Moroha scratched his head.
– Actually, you don't know when to give up, do you?

Shizuno, who was next to him, made a serious face and whispered into his ear.
– I keep wondering about today’s fight, it flickers in my mind, it doesn’t go away…
Moroha also replied in a low voice. Before, he thought that □Metaphysicals□ were something like natural disasters.
He heard where they had appeared, and if a dispatch order was given, they would proceed to fight them.
If they eliminated it, he would be happy, and that would be it.
He had never thought about them appearing right next to Akane Academy.
But now, it turned out that things were different.
The real identity of the □Metaphysicals□ was that they were weapon-like things operated by Six Wings.
If so, there should be some military purposes in the backing of their appearances.
– It may be my imagination, but I think we were being tested. After all, Shiba was also looking at us nearby, no? He took the trouble to do so.
– I can see that. But if that’s the case, then I think that Moroha is being targeted more than the Six Heads.
– That’s pretty disgusting…
Moroha ducked his head.
– Gee□□z, Nii-sama□□□□. Whenever you have a chance, you flirt with Urushibara, can you stop doing so?
– When did we flirt?
– If you have the time to give an explanation, then you should play with us.
– Come here nanodesu□.
His hands were pulled by Leshya and Maya and went to the sofa table.
Shizuno came behind him and sit at the place where her share of the cake was placed.
– Let’s play DX Reincarnation Game later.
– Okay, okay. I won’t lose next time, alright?
– I wonder if I can join you next time.
– But eat the cake first desu□. It will get cold desu□.
– I don’t think the cake will get cold, Shimon Maya?
– This is where you laugh, Elena-san.
Everyone talked lightheartedly with a fork in one hand.
No one had eaten cake yet because of the tacit understanding of waiting for the date to change, or rather, for the atmosphere to be washed away.
Everyone stared at the clock, and,
□Happy□□□□□Merry Christmas!□□□□□□
There was one person who made a mistake like before.

– Weak──
The whisper of Shiba Akira echoed in the concert hall that didn't exist anywhere in the world.
– More than Flavie Sakho and more than Kashiwaba Gen'ichi. I am obliged to say… so.
He was talking about the six-armed Evil Spirit.
– I approve the need to reconsider it.
"Invisible" regretfully complied with those words.
It was this shapeless assassin who chose the high school student who became the base body. He felt he was responsible.
– Like I thought, no strong Evil Spirit class will be born if we use small fry 「Saviors」?
Leonard said and almost everyone nodded.
The only ones who didn't do that were the girl on the balcony on the far right who was still sleeping like a log even today and Boris who was somewhat displeasured and had retreated into silence.
– But its regenerative power was magnificent, don't you agree, Akira-kun?
Louise, who wore a completely-white dress today, asked a question.
She sat down against the organ chair, making her legs sway to and fro.
She looked up at Shiba standing on the central balcony,
– Then, I wonder if the strength of the deep-rooted delusion the base body has is directly linked to that.
The base body used for the six-armed Evil Spirit this time had obstinacy and the strength of the deep-rooted delusion as its selling points, and as a result, it showed the highest ability among the three Evil Spirits in terms of regenerative power. Nobody objected Louise's analysis.
Leonard grumbled as he played around with his cowboy hat.
– No matter how strong the regenerative power is, if everything but that isn't good, then it's useless, isn't it? We don't know how to make strong Evil Spirits normally. Like I thought, it was useless this time…
– I don't think so? I may already have deciphered it.
Louise said impishly, catching the attention of Shiba and Leonard.
– Will you tell us?
– If Akira-kun asks for it.
Louise said impishly once again,
– Like I thought, if we use a strong 「Savior」 as a base body, then a strong Evil Spirit class will be born. This time, thanks to the use of a certified worthless 「Savior」, we could clearly see that tendency. The listing of "Invisible" wasn't wrong.
– However, why was the headless Evil Spirit stronger than Silhouette?
– What if a strong 「Savior」 is determined not by the power of the superficial fighting strength but by the strength of the primordial soul?
Hearing Louise's inquiry, Shiba showed interest with an「I see…」,
"Invisible" began to contemplate and Leonard snapped his fingers.

– That certainly may be! Even if they aren't blessed with natural *prana*, they can still compensate for it with skills. Like fighting strength.
– … Kashiwaba Gen'ichi is obviously that type.
– Then, why don't we try listing the guys who seem to have strong souls next time? We won't try checking them and there will be exceptions, but in general, I can think of those who have high *mana* or *prana* and have strong souls.
– Strong *prana* and *mana*, huh…. Like I thought, you mean AJ from England and Verratti from France? Heheh. Isn't this exciting? … Oh, hey, Booriiis? Why have you been gloomy for a while now? Don't tell me you're still bearing the failure of picking up women yesterday?
Leonard cracked a joke.
Boris didn't reply immediately.
Instead, he suddenly jumped over the balcony handrail and landed on the stage—near Louise, making a loud sound.
Louise blinked at the sudden act, catching their attention again.
Boris glared at everyone with a sour expression,
– Exciting? Don't joke with me….
He spat out in a subdued voice.
Then glared up straight at Shiba and continued his outrageous words.
– Shiba-san…. I misjudged you.
A bolt out of the blue. Louise opened her eyes wide.
On the other hand, Shiba looked down at him without being agitated.
Boris began to talk, his voice still subdued.
– Four years ago, you fought against the old Chinese man and lost. That in itself is okay. Thanks to that, the old man accumulated a lot of karma and the like and had to completely retreat from the line. You scrapped the Joker of 「Order」, it can be said that you actually won. I was excited.
Then, his tone changed as if snapping at him ferociously,
– But you just can't draw with Haimura this time! A draw that feels just like a loss!
His voice began to denounce him loudly.
– If you, the boss, get in the fight and can only draw with Haimura, then we have no way to beat them! Do we!?*
*TN: the we is the furigana reading for Six Wings and them is the furigana reading for White Knight Organization.
– ……
Shiba didn't reply.
Even though he took the blame directly, he wasn't affected by it; he just looked down with cold eyes.
However, Boris took that as a silent affirmation, got annoyed,
– I'm joining the stronger side. Today's my last day with you.
He boldly declared betrayal.
On the balcony next to Shiba, Leonard glared angrily at him.

– It’s you who shouldn’t joke with us…. Take back your words right now…. And apologize…. You don’t want to die, do you…?
He put his hand on the sword worn at the waist and let killing intent rise up together with a sky blue *prana*.
– Shut up, masochist fighting idiot! I just changed sides for money and women. It’s not my hobby to hang out with losers!
Boris took a defiant attitude and put marine blue *prana* on his whole body.
– This fucking opportunist…. Fine. Like I thought, you’re dead.
– If you can do it, try doing it!
A dangerous atmosphere suddenly hung over inside the concert hall.
These two guys had what was called an undesirable but inseparable relationship, a relationship that other people couldn’t tell whether they were on good terms or not. However, no one had ever seen them seething with anger like this.
Strangely, their *prana* was blue and blue.
However, Leonardo was an offensive combatant and Boris was the exact opposite of it, his specialty was protection.
They awaited their chance, scattering sparks with their eyes.
From the side—
– Don’t forget the words of the king.
An eerie mechanical voice echoed as if thrusting a smeared knife.
Louise nodded in a big way and agreed with him.
The words of the king.
In other words, the words of Shiba.
This was four years ago.
On the day when these six people met for the first time and Six Wings was formed, Shiba said:
– Our number is low; we are nothing but weak. The White Knight Organization has a great number of people and the Six Heads are powerful.
In a powerful tone of voice that no one could argue with.
– Therefore, we have to lie low, make plans and build up our strength.
In an imperative tone of voice that didn’t allow anyone to go against him.
– I remember it too.
Boris shrugged his shoulders and laughed mockingly.
– But I thought it was the modest aesthetics unique to the Japanese. Actually, we’re the stronger ones, so I believed that we could fight with the White Knight Organization! Leonard, Louise, “Invisible”, is that different for you? Is it!?
A provocative speech.
There was no reply for that.
Not because they couldn’t argue.
But because there was no need to argue.
– It looks like you are the only one who didn’t understand the meaning of Shiba-kun’s words, doesn’t it?
Louise let out a stifled laugh.

When making eye contact with her, “Invisible”, and of course, Leonard, it was transmitted to him that they had the same goal.
– Boris….
Shiba, who had kept his mouth shut until now, told him grimily.
– Can you unashamedly return to the White Knight Organization… now?
– Obviously! You think I haven’t made a path in case of emergency?
– Fufu. I… understand now.
Shiba loosened his mouth.
A devilish smile was shown on his face.
– The fact that Kashiwaba Gen’ichi was able to have something on us… it was your doing, wasn’t it?
Those words startled both Louise and Leonard.
– Boris, you fucker! You snitched on us!?
– Hah. You’re too late to notice, you hot-blooded piece of shit! What happened to your usual 『Like I thought』?
Leonard raged and Boris burst into laughter.
– Well, that says it all. I can’t go back empty-handed. I’ll be taking this amateur with me.
Boris turned his sticky-looking gaze to Louise.
Louise was a 『Dark Savior』.
Even at this very close distance, she had no technique to escape from Boris, a 『Light Savior』; this was why he came down to the stage.
Shiba’s 『Mars』 was strong, but it had to be taken into account that his speed wasn’t that fast.
– Your body size is quite big, you shrewd man.
Louise glared back at him as if to repel his wicked gaze.
– Say whatever you want. If I win, I’ll join the government forces.
Boris approached her while grinning.
In the middle of that.
Suddenly, someone came down.
Both Louise and Boris were surprised, they stared at that someone open-mouthed.
That someone couldn’t be identified because they wore ragged clothes that covered their body entirely.
Their sex and physique were unknown. However, they weren’t tall.
They could barely tell they were a Light Savior from the jade green *prana* they wore.
They probably jumped down from some balcony, but it landed from that height without making noise at all. They understood that the skillfulness of their fearsome 『Godlike Movement』 was backed by training.
They used a short walking cane, even though they seemed to have no disability or anything.
For a moment Louise wondered if it was truly “Invisible”, but,
– What a perfect… opportunity. I shall introduce you to everyone.
She noticed Shiba’s way of speaking was different.

Who on earth were they?
Even though he said “I shall introduce you”, Shiba kept his mouth shut as if to put on airs.
No──did they have to take a closer look at them?
– Hah. I don’t know who you are, but if you don’t want to pick a fight with me, get out of the way!
Boris threatened loudly.
At the same time, his whole body was wrapped in blue armor and helmet.
It wasn’t the type of 『The Origin』 that the well-known White Knight Edward had.
This was Boris’ 『Mars』.
The reason he was nicknamed “Blue Knight”.
It wasn’t as invincible as Edward’s “Silvery” Argusten, but this armor had no weight, it didn’t hinder Boris’ speed or actions at all.
Boris, who undoubtedly had one of the top-class abilities among A-Ranks──tried to grab the mysterious person with big steps──he wasn’t scared unless the opponent was Shiba.
At that moment, the air swayed.
It rustled.
With that pressure, the mysterious person threw the cane down and moved in the blink of an eye.
What was fired was an empty-handed thrust at the plexus.
A shrieking fighting shout surged.
– *Iiii

– Exactly. Since the seventh person has appeared for them, I thought it wouldn't be unfair for us to be… Seven Wings. Well, I do not hate number six though.
– I will take the place of Boris-sama. I am prepared to **risk my life** and I have taken the determination to be useful to everyone.
– Far from taking his place, you don't know how much the change benefits us!
Leonard wondered, trembling all over.
(When did Akira-kun pay **lip service** to him?)
Louise couldn't help but tremble with fear too.
And looked up at Shiba standing on the central balcony again.
With a look of love.
With a look of respect.
This was the true worth of her king.
The strength of the man who declared themselves "weak".
Boris couldn't understand it, but Louise and the others did.
What was really terrifying was──
He seriously didn't think he was that much of a deal, a monster that was still trying to become stronger.
A greedy monster.
That was why Shiba invited Lu Zhixin.
To make Six Wings stronger.
Certainly, as Boris said, today Shiba had drawn with Haimura Moroha, exposing that they were still no match for the White Knight Organization.
However, that wouldn't be the case tomorrow.
As long as Shiba weren't satisfied with his and their strength.
– Now, everyone… let's continue the conversation, shall we?
Shiba urged everyone coolly as if the rebellion of Boris never happened.
– I have a clue of a person who has a strong soul and is a □Savior□ with very deep-rooted delusions…
– Do not forget the pieces we have. I would like to test Mellein Flamini in combat.
– Before that, like I thought, can't we use Boris as a □Metaphysical□ too?
– Oh dear, these dangerous people are beyond my expectations.
– But it's a good idea. I agree with you. Moroha-kun will be so busy, poor guy□.
Louise turned around to the pipe organ and let her fingers slide on the keyboard.
The funeral march was played.
The **colorless and transparent golems** that stood still on both sides of her matched the rhythm of the melody and carried Boris quietly.
The stupid and careless Boris didn't know that Louise's guard was perfect, even if Zhixin hadn't come to help her.
Her fine performance resounded in the concert hall that didn't exist anywhere in the world.

Concealing the secrets talk and whispers of Shiba and company even more to the back of it.
“Flame King” Shiba Akira.
“Sword Flash” Leonard Van Percy.
“Medium” Amagi Utsuho.
“Invisible” ——.
S-Rank Lu Zhixin.
And she.
“Doll” Louise Saint-Germain.
The night of the Six Wings, of the Demons, had just begun.

Credits

Translation Group : Taekan translation

EPUB is done by JLN

Table of Contents

1. Illustration
2. Prologue
3. Chapter 1: Christmas is the premonition of trouble
4. Chapter 2: Santa Claus is a bit early
5. Chapter 3: The man called Isurugi Gen
6. Chapter 4: Christmas Party
7. Chapter 5: The man called Isurugi Jin
8. Chapter 6: A malice similar to wildfire
9. Epilogue
10. Credits